

THE  
CHRISTIAN EXAMINER.

N<sup>o</sup>. LXXXIX.

THIRD SERIES — N<sup>o</sup>. XX.

NOVEMBER, 1838.

ART. I.—*The Skepticism of the Present Age: being a Translation of one of the Lectures of M. Jouffroy, in his Cours de Droit Naturel.*

GENTLEMEN,—We have now completed the discussion of the systems which destroy the basis of morality by reasonings not drawn from the facts of human nature, and according to my original plan I proposed to pass next to a second class of systems, which lead to the same result through an incomplete and false analysis of these facts. But after what has been said in the two last lectures on the subject of skepticism, I have thought it might be useful for us to give some consideration to what may be called the *skepticism of the present age*. It is well thus to characterize it, because as it is not in my view a form of genuine skepticism, this distinctive name may aid us in acquiring a correct and precise view of the actual moral condition of our era.

Skepticism, Gentlemen, is a disposition in the mind to admit nothing as worthy of belief; a disposition produced by such a view of our means for acquiring truth, as leads to the conclusion that we are incompetent to attain to any certain knowledge. Such is skepticism strictly defined, and to such skepticism I will give the name of *absolute skepticism*, to distinguish it from another state of mind also called *skepticism*, which differs from it entirely.

The state of mind to which I now refer may be seen in any person who is without a faith; and yet he may be wholly want-

ing in the characteristic of genuine skepticism, a determination to believe nothing, founded on the opinion that we have no means of arriving at certainty. A person may be without a faith simply because he does not know what the truth is upon the great questions of human interest, and not at all because he admits in principle that the human mind is incapable of attaining to truth. Let us call this state of mind *actual skepticism*, to distinguish it from the disposition to believe nothing, which I have named *absolute skepticism*.

Keeping in mind this distinction, we shall see at once that the mass of mankind can never be *absolute skeptics*. They have not the information and leisure requisite for such an analysis of the phenomena of knowledge, as would lead to the conviction that the human mind is incapable of arriving at truth. The world has never yet seen, and for ages at least never will see a whole people penetrated with such a conviction, and possessed by such a skepticism. But on the other hand, *actual skepticism*, or a simple want of faith from mere ignorance of the truth upon important questions, may very easily prevail among the mass of a people; though even this, the only kind of skepticism to which they are liable, is always repugnant to them.

Among the various considerations from which absolute skepticism arises, there is but one that can to any great degree be felt by a whole nation and thus introduce into it the germ of genuine skepticism. This consideration is the contradictory and variable nature of human opinions. But it is only the better informed who are liable to be impressed even by this; for to rise to a view of human opinion as contradictory and variable, must require such a degree of historical knowledge as can be possessed only by the more enlightened. The people truly so called are not competent to this. I add, now, that this truly skeptical view, the only one, as I have said, which can penetrate the heart of a people, is always a traditional and transmitted one, and never originates in the spontaneous action of the people itself. In every instance it will be found to be an impulse communicated from the philosophy prevalent among the few, who consecrate their lives to thought and reflection.

True skepticism is then peculiar to men who reflect, whose social function, if I may use the expression, is thinking. Absolute skepticism is always foreign to the mass. The skepticism to which they are liable is *actual skepticism*; and this is, as we

have seen, not a determined disposition but an accidental state of mind, consisting in a simple want of knowledge as to what the truth is upon the great questions of human interest.

No student of history, Gentlemen, will deny that there have been eras, when this actual skepticism, this want of all faith and conviction has been widely spread throughout the mass of mankind ; or that, on the contrary, there have been eras, when systems giving definite solutions of all great questions have prevailed. History shows us states of society, where whole nations, from the child who has not begun to think to the old man on the verge of life, have believed firmly in certain absolute dogmas ; and it shows us also other states, where whole nations have been plunged in doubt and ignorance as to truth. As a matter of fact then there have been eras, when actual skepticism has pervaded the mass, and others, when it has been unknown.

History assigns to these different states of society names which are most distinctive of their peculiar characteristics. She calls the former religious eras, the latter irreligious ; because in the one religion has prevailed, while in the other its influence has been wanting. For observe, Gentlemen, a system of faith upon the great questions of human interest, established on the common convictions of all men, of the enlightened, and of the people alike, always assumes the form and receives the name of a religion. Thus far, in the world's history, it has always been under a religious form, that the great ideas, which have possessed nations, and governed and guided them, have been exhibited. On the other hand, the eras, where the masses have wanted all faith and established convictions, have been those in which religious faith was annihilated, and where no religious doctrine prevailed. It is with good reason then, that history distinguishes as religious the eras of faith, and as irreligious those of actual skepticism.

What now it may be asked are the causes of this skepticism ? I have elsewhere exhibited them, and they are at the present day well known. When a system of faith has prevailed among the masses for a length of time, there will, and must come a period sooner or later, when the errors, which are intermingled with even the highest and most important truth in all human opinions, will strike the minds of the most enlightened. Then springs up a spirit of critical examination, which, scrutinizing the whole system of faith and discovering its various imperfections,

ends by concluding, that where the parts are so defective, the whole system must be unworthy of credit in an advanced stage of society, and should therefore be rejected. It is among philosophers, or at least among the most intelligent members of society, that such a revolution commences ; and it is among them that it is carried out and completed ; but the results of their researches penetrate all classes, and finding their way down from the summit to the base of society, reach finally the masses, where sapping and ruining all convictions and the whole system of truth, they produce a total want of faith. Such is the progress of actual skepticism among the people. It is a result of a foreign and superior influence, that is, of the action of philosophers, who summing up the knowledge which the human race has attained, and comparing with it the prevailing faith, discover and announce that this received system is not on a level with the advanced intelligence of their age, and should therefore be rejected.

That we, Gentlemen, at the present day, are living in such an era is so evident, that few would be inclined to question it. How, indeed, can it be denied that in most minds now there is an utter want of faith upon the great questions which interest man ? And yet, Gentlemen, in the midst of this actual skepticism, you cannot find a shadow of absolute philosophic skepticism. Indeed, if you could penetrate the minds of the mass, you could not find in their modes of thinking any one of the grounds of absolute skepticism, even so much as suspected. The people do not trouble themselves with asking, "what is the authority of the human faculties," or, "what is the nature of the object of knowledge, or the nature of knowledge itself ;" they are utterly ignorant whether the nature of our faculties, of the object of knowledge, and of knowledge itself, are or are not such, as would lead to the conclusion, that the mind is incapable of arriving at truth. The masses never think of this. But further I will say, that even in the more intelligent portion of society, in that portion which thinks and reflects, and may properly be called the philosophic class, the elements of absolute skepticism are hardly to be found at all, or only in a very small degree. Without doubt, in our age as in all ages, there are minds to which such considerations present themselves, but the incredulity of our age is not caused by them. The cause of prevalent incredulity is simply, that all former solutions of interesting problems have been refuted, and that no

others as yet are found. Our age is not so much skeptical, as it is wanting in faith ; it does not believe that truth cannot be discovered ; it is merely ignorant of the truth.

The revolution, of which this state of mind is the result, had its origin long ago ; it dates back not to the political revolution of 1830, nor to the events of 1814, nor to the social revolution of 1789 ; it has come down from a much earlier age, and began as far back as the fifteenth century. I say as far, because we should find on close examination, that it had an origin yet more remote.

In this revolution, Gentlemen, there have been two distinct periods, each having its peculiar causes, character, and results ; and we must distinguish these periods accurately, if we would form a precise notion of our present situation.

Before this want of all conviction, which I have described, can pervade any people, there must have been previously a conflict of longer or shorter duration, but still a violent one, against the dominant faith. Every such revolution, as we have been considering, has necessarily its origin in a period of warfare with prevalent opinions, terminating in their defeat and overthrow. Now in the present instance, a controversy of this nature has been continued from earlier times to our own day ; and it was indeed the striking and distinguishing characteristic of the eighteenth century, that it was incompetent to finish the controversy, which had been transmitted to it. The eighteenth century was the closing scene of the first period of the revolution, which we of the nineteenth century are living in the midst of ; it did not begin this revolution ; it neither discovered nor announced its leading principles ; but it did make them popularly known, and did disseminate their results through society. The eighteenth century acted an important part therefore in the progress of this revolution, for it exhibited plainly to all eyes the true nature of the controversy.

In this first period of the revolution, Gentlemen, the loss of earlier convictions was not accompanied with a desire of another faith to supply their place. We do not find, in the skeptical writers of the eighteenth century, any longing expressed for faith. They were filled with a sense of the work of destruction which they were commissioned to perform ; but so far were they from being conscious of a desire and need of faith, that they even rejoiced and triumphed in their skepticism as in their chief title to honor. We have reached an era now, however,

when the results of this destructive war remain, without the joy in casting off belief which characterized the last century. This change, Gentlemen, is a momentous one, and it could not but come. It is not in our nature to remain satisfied without light upon the great questions of human interest ; when the mind has once lost the truth, it must seek it anew, for it cannot live without it. It is only by a transient illusion, that in the earlier period of the revolutionary era rest and peace are sought in skepticism ; no sooner is victory attained than the illusion is dissipated, and the need of faith again is felt. Then begins the second period of the revolutionary movement, a period in which all conviction being destroyed, the desire for faith is once more felt with all its consequences. And this, Gentlemen, is precisely our situation at the present day ; we have a want of faith and a longing for it. These are the two characteristics of our age. And our actual condition in all its detail will seem perfectly intelligible, and even such as he might have predicted, to any one, who fully comprehends the logical consequences, of these states of mind. Let us then attempt to follow out the chief of these consequences.

The striking and predominant trait of the eighteenth century, Gentlemen, was a disposition to admit nothing as worthy of belief. As the work then to be completed was the destruction of all that was false, the tendency of every mind was to skepticism. But now, when a desire for faith coexists with a want of all conviction and established principle, a wholly opposite disposition has been developed, even a disposition to believe everything ; and this disposition to believe everything is really, Gentlemen, a distinctive characteristic of our age, often as men deceive themselves by calling it a skeptical one.

The consequences of this disposition to believe everything have been different in different minds. Impelled by the common want some have endeavored to reproduce the faith of past ages ; and this was natural enough, because as that faith had already once received a definite and complete shape, it was necessary only to readopt it. This class of persons have pronounced their anathema against the three last centuries, and all that they have accomplished, especially against the eighteenth, the most fatal of all to previously established convictions. Devotees to the past, they admire and honor it, and seek to reestablish in their minds, and rekindle in their hearts, that faith which these three centuries have extinguished. Another class, Gentle-

men, have become utterly discouraged ; and seeing behind them only ruined and overthrown convictions, and before them an empty void, they have given up all hope of finding truth. This is the party of despair. There is a third class incomparably the largest, who are waiting for a good which the future is to bring ; they too feel the want of faith, but they neither despair of finding it, nor do they seek it in the past, — they look for it to the coming time.

It is natural and necessary that the party of the past and the party of despair should be small in number and in influence ; the third party only, which, impelled by the common want, seek to satisfy it by the discovery of a new moral order of the social world, can hope for success.

This movement of loving and seeking for a new faith has introduced a new period in the revolution. It began with the persuasion that the faith of the future must be directly opposite to that of the past, an illusion quite natural and conformable to the laws of the human mind. We all reason thus in great and small affairs alike ; it is the first and instinctive movement of the human mind. This reaction produced a general tendency to the opposite of what had already been. We had been living under an absolute government ; we were driven therefore to the opposite of such a government, that is, to a democracy. The philosophy of the Christian faith which had prevailed was eminently spiritual ; a material faith was therefore introduced to reign for its moment. Art too under the influence of Christianity had been spiritual and ideal, like the convictions which it embodied ; and art therefore must become, as it did under David, first material, and then somewhat later fond of the actual and even of the deformed. The morality of a Christian era had been a morality of devotedness, of self-sacrifice, productive of greatness of soul and character ; the morality which followed the triumph of skepticism was that of pleasure and self-interest. Such were the first fruits of the reconstructive impulse which, setting out from the void that doubt had brought, rushed into the opposite of what had been with frenzied ardor. The necessary result of such a movement was to produce such an exaggerated and unnatural mode of thinking as could not long fail to awaken disgust and dread ; and for this plain reason. When skepticism succeeds in overturning a system of faith that has long prevailed over any large portion of the human race, it is by reason of the errors and imperfections of that system. But

skepticism is not confined to those errors, and does not limit itself to a demand of their rejection ; reasoning from the parts to the whole, it pronounces the entire system false, and the generations absurd which have held it. Hence, the illusion that truth will be found in what is exactly opposite to past conviction. Now it is impossible that the human race should be governed for ages by ideas which are wholly false ; there must then have been a large portion of truth in any doctrine which has for any length of time been generally admitted ; for thus and thus only could it have acquired and preserved its ascendancy. To throw ourselves then, in our desire to reconstruct a faith, headlong into the very opposite of what has heretofore been believed, is necessarily to turn away from much which certainly is true in the search of what may be either true or not. Systems, which originate in such a mad movement of reaction, are destined always to disappear after a short existence, before the good sense of mankind. And thus already have we seen the reign of materialism and deformity disappear from art. And in literature also, the impassioned style, which has overstepped and trampled down the rules of Aristotle and Boileau, may be considered as nearly exhausted and soon to pass away. The same movement carried us from the old political regime to extreme and unlimited democracy ; but already has this tendency begun to be most seriously and severely judged by that good sense, which sees at once its inconveniences and excesses. The reign of Materialism has been of short duration, and already in the hearts of the young at least, is Spiritualism enthroned ; indeed, it would be difficult to find in society at large any individuals advocating that moral code of mere pleasure, which was openly professed by the most respectable of the last century. It appears plain, therefore, that many of the extreme tendencies of the reaction are already dead, while others show symptoms of decay.

The systems which resulted from these tendencies were thus destined to be shortlived ; the fruits of a blind reaction, they were blind and fanatical themselves. And now that their ephemeral reign is ended, we are fast falling, and have in part already fallen into a state yet worse than that which immediately succeeded the triumph of skepticism. Then indeed there was an absence of all faith, but there was not a want of confidence in our power of attaining to truth ; for we had not yet tested the power by trial, and it seemed as if it would be easy to find new solutions of the problems of greatest interest to man, in place of

former ones which were destroyed. But now when the first efforts of reason in the examination of these questions has failed, now when we have seen only such foolish systems invented as deserve no respect, doubt arises as to the capacity of human intelligence to rediscover the truth which we have lost ; and hence a more profound uncertainty and a deeper consciousness of want of faith than was felt at first. From this feeling of want and of uncertainty have originated the most striking peculiarities of the present age.

You may have remarked, that when, in meditating by yourselves or in conversation with others, you seek to determine what is beautiful or deformed, true or false, good or bad, you meet with difficulties ; and that in all debates upon such questions each side seems to have reasons in its favor and defenders ; so that it actually appears as if arguments for and against were equally strong and worthy of consideration.

But, Gentlemen, do you therefore conclude that this is the natural state of human intelligence, or that these are phenomena common to all eras ? By no means. It is the absence, in our day, of any *criterion* of true and false, of good and bad, of beauty and deformity, which produces this condition of things. As all first principles have been destroyed, all rules to guide the judgment have been abolished also ; and without a common rule recognised by judgment, we cannot have a common understanding with others, or arrive at any certain solution of any question. And what is the consequence, Gentlemen ? Each individual will feel that he is free to believe as he chooses, and will declare with authority his chosen faith. By what test shall it be condemned ? By that of some grand truth which is recognised and admitted ? There is none. By the authority then only of any one who disputes his opinion, and who, as he is his equal, cannot be his judge. In our day individuals reign supreme, their authority is complete and unlimited. And as the right of each individual to think as he pleases has naturally produced an infinite variety of opinions, all equal in worth and authority, the result is that state of complete intellectual anarchy which we, Gentlemen, are living under. On the one side is the unlimited authority of the individual, for this authority is subject to no common faith, no admitted *criterion* of truth, by which all minds are governed and directed, and around which they rally. On the other side is an infinite diversity of opinion ; for as the authority of one

individual is equal to that of another, each is entitled to call his opinion true. Individuality and anarchy then are the two great characteristics of our era; they are inevitable in the present age, and, as we see, they everywhere prevail.

One further circumstance co-operates to establish this state of intellectual democracy. It is experience which chiefly produces inequality between men, storing as it does the minds of those who have lived longest with the greatest variety of facts and ideas. But it is the tendency of eras like our own to call in question this incontrovertible fact. Succeeding to long ages which have believed in what is now proved to be false, it has and cannot but have a contempt for the past; the past is to it the symbol of error; thus far it thinks men have known nothing and doubted nothing; truth is to be sought and found in the future; the more attached we are to the past the farther are we from truth, and truth is nearer the more we live in the future and the younger we are. Hence, Gentlemen, the thorough disdain for experience and antiquity which marks our times. The young man of to-day measures himself with those of many years, and before his school days are over the boy thinks and declares himself equal to his sire; and this state of things is a strict and necessary consequence of what has gone before. This notion of the equality of minds is carried so far, that the judgment of eighteen has as much authority as that of fifty, and the reasoning of a day laborer on a question of policy is considered as decisive as that of a statesman, whose whole life has been past in the midst of public affairs, or of a student grown grey in thought. Undoubtedly the good sense, which survives the greatest alterations of human intelligence, will moderate this intellectual democracy, and check the consequences which may be seen logically to flow from it; but though checked, they yet more or less appear, as if to make mankind aware of their tendencies.

This is not all, Gentlemen; the conviction that the past has been deceived leads to a disregard of the serious study of historical facts; and the conviction, that there is no criterion for truth produces a contempt for reflection; and hence results a profound ignorance, which, combined with presumption, are two characteristic traits of the present intellectual era. The consequence of all this upon the literary productions of our time is the amazing folly, with which notions at once the most absurd and trite are confidently thrown out, and the utter want

of all such positive knowledge as would authorize the confidence. These two defects are, however, but the necessary consequences of the individuality and intellectual anarchy, which disturb us ; and are but a consequence of our present situation, which is itself a necessary period in the revolutionary movement now passing around us.

The result of the various facts which I have now, Gentlemen, been describing, is a general weakness of character. Character indeed scarcely exists in our day, and for this reason. Of the two elements of which character is composed, firm will and fixed principles, the second is wanting, and the first therefore powerless. For to what end would be a firm will without fixed principles ? A mighty instrument, doubtless, but a useless one. Governed and directed by strong conviction it will work wonders of decision, of devotedness, of constancy and heroism. But in such an age as ours, without established faith and fixed ideas, and without, moreover, the power of forming them, where the only authority is the caprice of individuals, who, proud of independence, glory in deciding in every case for themselves, how can such a will exist ? He, who has faith, is proof against the absurd ideas and foolish imaginations, which visit even the soundest mind ; strong in his convictions, he applies them as a test and a criterion, and chimeras, fancies, and inconsistencies disappear, while that alone, which is in harmony with his convictions remains. But we who are without faith want this criterion, and therefore we can neither judge, approve, nor blame. And consequently, as a fact, we neither do approve nor condemn ; we accept and tolerate everything ; and by turns the sport of wholly opposite opinions, we are wanting in well ordered purposes, in definite plans for conduct, and in dignity of character. What I now state is not brought forward in the way of reproach, but as a matter of fact ; our age is what it actually is by necessity. I only describe and explain it.

The love of change, Gentlemen, is another characteristic of our present intellectual condition. Love of any kind, Gentlemen, is only a desire for something which we need ; and our great need now is of those truths, which may restore and regenerate individuals and society ; it is in the future only that we can expect to find them. Hence our age is looking with hope and love to that future, and gives itself up cheerfully to change. We seem to be living not so much in the pres-

ent as in the future, and receive each novelty with rapturous enthusiasm; as if, because new, it was that of which we feel the want. The secret and unconscious longing of our hearts is for something yet untried, as if it alone could satisfy our desires.

Hence, Gentlemen, that indiscriminate passion for revolution, which makes us the dupes and tools of each adventurer's ambitious dreams, and renders vain the sacrifices and the cost of social convulsion.

For observe, Gentlemen, what we need is no mere outward change. Let society pass through any number of outward revolutions, and, unless the ideas which it is in want of are thereby supplied, they will leave it exactly where it was, and will be wholly useless. What we want is an answer to these questions, which Christianity has heretofore answered, but which to many remain unanswered now; and nothing is so ill calculated to supply this want as tumults in the streets and overturns of governments. Reflection alone makes discoveries in truth, and peace is needed for reflection. Outward revolutions are indeed of service, when they tend to realize the truths which have already been discovered; but to desire revolution when the truths for which an age is sighing are yet unknown, and as a means for discovering them, is to commit the absurdity of wishing that the consequence should produce its principle, or an end its means.

This, however, is the very thing which the multitude does not see; it is so deluded, as to expect from every future change that new and unknown something, which may make them happy. They hurry on to revolution with blind madness, impatient of the present, eager for the future. Before this torrent of popular passion no institution can stand, no government endure. Hence such shortlived popularity as we continually see. When a new man appears in the political world we greet him with admiration and honor. Why? Because we hope that in him we have at last found one, who can satisfy our wants. And what follows? As he, no more than we ourselves, has any answer for the problems, which we wish to solve, in a few weeks after his elevation to power we find him barren and empty as his predecessors, and at once his popularity declines. In our day, in fact, the mere possession of power is reason sufficient for unpopularity. They only are or can be popular, who have not yet acquired the power they

seek for. They as yet have not uttered their secret; and the moment when they are in a position to declare it, and when it appears that they, like the rest, have no more to tell, the warm favor which welcomed them grows cool, for the illusion which made them great is gone.

From what has now been said, Gentlemen, you can readily perceive the cause of the unhappiness of that collective being, called a government, in our day. The people are like children, who feel a want and cry to the nurse for something, she can neither discover nor imagine what, and which very possibly may be wholly out of reach. The people feel a painful uneasiness, but they know not its cause; and they ascribe it therefore now to the form of government under which they live, and then to those who conduct it, that the evil which they suffer from is not rooted out. They forever desire to substitute other men for those now in power; in place of established forms they would have new ones; and for existing laws and the social order already prevailing they seek new laws and a new order; persuaded that the source of the evil is in the government, in the laws, in the organization of society, and that with the change of these they shall find what they seek for. But were all changed they would still remain as unhappy and discontented as at first, for the changes they desire are only outward and material, not moral, while it is a moral change of which there really is a want. And as long as the desired solutions of these questions remain unfound, in the light of which society is to be remodelled in a form adequate to the wants of the human mind, so long will society continue to pass through a constant succession of ineffectual changes.

Whence, Gentlemen, arose that social structure which the three last centuries have sapped the foundations of, and which the revolution finally overthrew? It arose from the solutions which Christianity had given of the great problems of human interest. These solutions, unlike those proposed by the wise of our time, were not negative in character; and hence the results to which they led in art, religion, and politics were positive; institutions and laws proceeded from them; organizations and forms of government, social and political order were wrapped as a germ in these solutions; and this order has been, and could not but have been, unfolded in past ages. At the present day this order is destroyed, and to produce another in its room we need a new germ, that is to say, new solutions

of those grand questions, which Christianity had answered before. These questions must be answered before either individuals or communities can be reorganized and reproduce a new system of life and conduct. How indeed can they, who know not the end for which they are living upon earth, determine the manner in which they ought to live ; and ignorant of this, how can they constitute, organize, and regulate society ? If we know not the destiny of individuals, we cannot know that of society ; and if we know not the destiny of society, we cannot organize it. A religious and moral faith is then the only possible solution of political problems. We have not such a faith, and no outward revolution therefore whatsoever can accomplish anything for society.

We cannot meditate too much, Gentlemen, upon these considerations, if we would acquire a distinct and accurate view of the present state of things ; for here, and not elsewhere, is its explanation. But the people are ignorant of their true condition, and their blind and generous impulses therefore are used as instruments by ambitious men. Each day appear a crowd of empirics, who promise on the single condition of being raised to power that they can supply the want, which all are conscious of, and seek in vain to satisfy. The intelligent and enlightened see, that these quacks abuse their power ; but as if they had really found that unknown something, which all are craving for, they talk of *republic*, of *unlimited suffrage*, of *legitimacy*, and seduced by the word which we mistake for a thing, we passionately pursue the untried good and discover our mistake, only when experience has proved that it is an empty name. Thus again and again we give new names to the unknown good, and chase a thousand phantoms, which can never satisfy us, but will forever leave us discontented as before. Here is the explanation of the constant disappointments, which for forty years the friends of social liberty have experienced in France.

By turns, each new form of freedom has seemed to be the good for which we were sighing, and a want of it the source of all our woes. But when successively we have acquired them and yet found ourselves unimproved in condition, we are restless as before ; and a revolution is scarcely over, when the plan is sketched for a new one. The cause of this is our ignorance of our own condition. These various forms of civil liberty, which we have been struggling for, civil liberty itself

indeed, is not and cannot be the end which society in our day is really pursuing. It is indeed an advantage of free communities that no master can turn them from the pursuit of their true end, and impose upon them one of his own choosing ; and they have this other advantage also that they are better fitted than other communities to discover and accomplish their true destiny. In this twofold aspect the various successive forms of civil liberty have been beneficial ; but beyond this they have brought no good. Liberty is nothing more than an opportunity offered to a people of accomplishing its destiny, and a guarantee that it shall not be hindered from so doing ; liberty is not in itself the accomplishment of that destiny. The same may be said of order ; and it is plain, therefore, that the true destiny of a community is something different from and superior to both liberty and order.

Do you doubt this, Gentlemen ? Examine then the various rights, which we now enjoy, and see if they are anything more than opportunities and means. We were filled with a passion for popular election, and after long struggles secured the privilege, and in consequence a large number of our fellow citizens now take a part in the appointment of the highest public functionaries. And when, Gentlemen, at great expense we assemble our citizens to elect those, who shall command the national militia, or become municipal counsellors, or counsellors of departments, or members of the chamber of deputies, what do we really accomplish ? Two things. In the first place, we give a pledge that no individual shall be allowed to substitute his private interests for those of his country, or to prevent the nation from accomplishing its destiny ; and secondly, we entrust to the assembled citizens the responsibility of determining and declaring what measures are most for the public good, or at least of sending to the various national councils men, who can decide upon them, or elect among themselves competent persons to be in power. Such are the reasons for which popular elections are valuable ; but of these two results, one positive and the other negative, mere election attains only the first ; it really does prevent any individual from using the country for his own purposes, and this is all that it can do ; for if the electors and those elected are ignorant of what constitutes the public good, it is plain that our wants will not be satisfied, and therefore that mere liberty of elections will not secure the end we seek. The same may be said with regard to liberty of the press and all other civil

rights. So that, however desirous we may be of obtaining various forms of freedom and civil institutions, we shall deceive ourselves greatly, if we suppose that they can by themselves afford a remedy to social ills. Forms and institutions are but pledges and protections against whatever threatens to impede the progress of a moral revolution; and possibly they may be a means also to advance it; but this is all; a moral revolution only can cure our social diseases. I say that the exercise of civil right may *possibly* be a means of advancing this revolution, because high as is my respect for the popular mind, I yet think this popular mind, this common sense, rather fitted to recognise truth than to discover it; of all the great truths which have influenced the destinies of the human race, I know not one which originated in the instinct of the mass; they have all been the discoveries of gifted individuals, and the fruit of the solitary meditations of thinking men. But once brought to light, once exhibited, and it is the adoption of them by the mass of the people which consecrates them.

What has now been said, Gentlemen, of our present moral condition, will sufficiently indicate the course of conduct which every wise and earnest man is in our era bound to pursue, in view of his own dignity and the interests of his country.

And first, Gentlemen, it is his duty to be calm, to raise himself above, and to escape from the chimerical dreams to which the mass of men are the prey; and thus be preserved from the delusive and absurd schemes which are their natural result. To attain this state of mind it is only necessary to comprehend the universal law of revolution, and the precise period of the revolution now passing, at which we, in this age, have arrived. If in what is going on around us, we accustom ourselves to see the successive phases of a grand law of humanity in the process of development, we shall be less disposed to abandon ourselves to the passionate fears and hopes, to the ardent attachments and aversions which every new party and event however trifling will otherwise awaken. It is only when we regard them from this elevation that we can judge of their real importance. When we take a comprehensive view of the mighty revolution, which for the three last centuries has been agitating Europe, and consider its sources and tendencies,—when we measure what has been accomplished with what remains yet undone,—when we call to mind the slowness with which it has thus far advanced, and with which it is destined to

advance in the time to come, — and then conceive distinctly of the true nature of this revolution, and the end at which it aims, how trifling appear many events called important, how momentous others at first sight small. Each object then assumes its just dimensions, and the illusions and passions which had confused the view are scattered, even if they do not wholly disappear.

For those who live in the future, and who are seeking from government and the laws a good which no individuals can bestow, — that unknown and mysterious something which the future veils, — that ineffable ideal, the desire for which prompts each social movement, and which, for myself, I call a new system of faith on the grand questions which must forever interest man ; — for all such persons a clear understanding of the nature of the passing revolution, and of the precise point at which it has now arrived, is well calculated to moderate impatience. For when we once comprehend what is really to be accomplished, we see that it cannot be done in a moment, but that it must necessarily be the fruit of long labor and slowly perfected ; and that it is not in the power of institutions or laws to hasten the fulness of time. Past history bears witness, that such a revolution must be gradual. A state of society similar to our own prevailed in Greece before the introduction of Christianity, and was brought to an end by that event. Skepticism had made its appearance in Greece six centuries at least before the Christian era ; in the time of Thales, even individuals of enlightened minds had already begun to entertain doubts of the prevalent faith, — and two centuries later, in the time of Socrates, there were probably but very few among the citizens exercising political rights, who were not wholly given up to incredulity. Socrates was condemned, to be sure, on the ground that he attacked religion, but his sentence was dictated really by political reasons ; and we, in this day, have seen a parallel instance, in a neighboring country, of this union between private incredulity and public profession of faith. If, then, the ancient faith in Greece was destroyed four centuries before the coming of Jesus Christ, and if philosophy even at that early period had begun to seek for new and higher forms of truth, it is plain that mankind were kept for centuries in waiting for that positive faith which could alone reorganize it. Yet more, it is well known, that the establishment of the Christian religion in the minds of the common people did not immediately follow its first introduction ; it penetrated to them only by slow degrees,

and centuries were needed to complete its progress. When, then, we attempt to measure the time needed to perfect and finish this former revolution, we find that the human race was occupied for nearly a thousand years in their passage from paganism to Christianity. God forbid, Gentlemen, that I should assert that the human mind, with the immense power which it has acquired in the course of eighteen centuries, will require so long a period as this to finish the work which it has begun in our day ; and far be it from me to think that the revolution now in progress is to lead to any such complete change of opinion. Christianity has too strong a foundation in truth, ever to disappear as paganism did ; its destruction was but a dream of the eighteenth century, which never will be realized. But undoubtedly it is to be purified ; undoubtedly it is to receive new forms and important additions ; for otherwise, the revolt it has excited, the incredulity which yet prevails, and the long struggles and labors of the whole of Christendom, have been without a meaning and a cause ; and this it is impossible to believe. As yet, Gentlemen, when we view it rightly, this revolution has been but three centuries in progress ; and we must not allow ourselves to imagine that by to-morrow we shall reach its end ; neither should it astonish us, since the first period of this revolution has so lately terminated, that we have arrived as yet at only its second period. Many generations may very possibly pass away, before the faith of futurity will assume a definite shape, and be planted deep in the hearts of the multitude, to bless them with the *Credo* for which they now sigh in vain. And during the intervening period the world may remain, as in ancient times, a prey to that state of intellectual and moral anarchy which we have described, and which nothing but the manifestation of some new form of faith can remove. It was Christianity, Gentlemen, which cured this evil in ancient times ; and it worked a moral cure before it did a material one ; the moral remedy was the principle, of which the material was the consequence. Our cure must proceed in a like manner ; first truth, and then social reformation as the effect of truth. Such is the law of revolution. At present, there is hardly the faint appearance and first dawning of new solutions of the great questions of human interest. And it is plain, therefore, that we are as yet far distant from the last period and final completion of this revolution. The journals, which day by day announce a new order of things, give no description of this better state.

They say, and say truly, that the present order does not meet our wants ; but they do not tell us what should supply its place ; this indeed is precisely what they are incapable of doing ; for they, like the people, feel only the want of truths which are yet undiscovered, and they, like the people too, are ignorant of them. They would be nearer the truth if they did but know that they were ignorant of it ; and they would be nearer still, if they but comprehended that as yet it cannot be known.

Such, Gentlemen, are the means by which we may preserve a calm mind in this feverish and agitated era. But we must do more than this ; we must not only preserve the mind calm ; we must direct it. And in this regard how can we do better than imitate the example of those men, who in an age similar to our own, — the age which followed the overthrow of the ancient faith, — so lived that their names have been reverenced through succeeding times ? These men, who were the Stoics, announced, in the midst of universal anarchy and corruption, the imperishable principles of morality ; established rules for private duty when all public law was broken down ; and sheltering themselves in virtue, passed untainted through the most polluted era that history records. We need but mention the names of Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, and their illustrious friends, to show that it is in the power of individuals to preserve their characters and conduct pure, amidst the ruins of even the corruptest ages. We then, Gentlemen, certainly can do it, — we who live in an age so much more elevated in character, under the light of Christianity, and of a philosophy purified by its power. It is entirely possible for any individual, who will seek seriously to distinguish good from evil, to keep his mind and conscience clear from the swarm of absurd and immoral notions, which an incredible license of thought yet more than of feeling, lets loose each day upon society from the journals, the theatre, and books. There is no one, who cannot, by consulting good sense and his own heart, plan out for himself a course of conduct conformable to the purest maxims of morality, and by firm purpose remain faithful to it and realize his ideal. This, Gentlemen, is possible for us one and all ; and what we can do, we ought to do. No one is excusable for not preserving inviolate his character and reason in a period like the present ; for although there are in our social condition circumstances, which may be temptations to those who will allow themselves to be led astray and corrupted,

yet it is precisely that we may be prepared for such situations, that God has endowed us with judgment and with will.

And our country, Gentlemen,—our country,—which, next to integrity and honor, should be the first object of regard,—is there not in our time, as in all times, a way of being useful to her? There is; it is to make her true situation and the causes of it known to all her children; to explain to them the secret of their wants, the nature of the good which all are craving, and the means best adapted to its acquisition. This in my judgment is the only possible way of keeping society calm and well ordered, when society is without a faith. We must then, Gentlemen, enlighten as much as we can the great body of the people; never was light so necessary, never did they need discernment more. When society is under the influence of an established faith, the catechism neutralizes the effects of ignorance. But when minds without convictions are left an undefended prey to all ideas good and bad, useful and injurious, as they may arise, there is but one source of safety, and that is the diffusion of such a degree of information, as may enable each citizen to discern his own true interest and the actual condition of his country. All of our day, who understand the times, have a mission of patriotism to discharge; it is to communicate to others their own information, and thus aid in calming down the moral conflicts of the public mind, as they have calmed their own. To one, who really comprehends the present state of things, there is no cause for fear. And once free from fear we can meditate, we can plan our course, we can work, we can live; but when we rise each morning, in the dread of ruin, with the feeling that we are on the verge of some terrible catastrophe, thought becomes impossible; we can but abandon ourselves to the current of events, and there is an end at once to labor and reflection, to all plans for life, and all developments of character; like leaves we become the sport of each passing breeze.

And now, Gentlemen, after what I have said in this lecture of the fruitlessness of mere outward and material revolutions,—after the proof I have offered that they never can advance society towards the good which it is seeking,—but that they produce always disorder and suffering,—need I add, that it is the duty of every enlightened man and good citizen, to prevent if possible such useless evil. Once more I repeat, therefore, that when it is the object of outward revolution to realize and com-

plete a moral revolution, then and then only revolution is both reasonable and right. But when a conviction of the need of a moral organization for society, so far from being generally established in the mind and heart of the community, is not even apprehended by those who profess to be the heralds of civilization,—in such a case, revolution can only bring uncompensated suffering; and every friend of his country should withhold his aid. In speaking to you thus, Gentlemen, I am not preaching a sermon. I do but simply unfold to your view the necessary consequence of the great law of revolution, to which humanity is subject. My frankness and freedom will not, I am confident, be misunderstood.

W. H. C.

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#### ART. II.—*Exclusion of Witnesses for Want of Religious Belief.*

WE propose, in this article, to institute an inquiry into the reasonableness, and the right of *that rule of law, by which the atheist, and the disbelievers of the scripture doctrine of reward and punishment, are forbidden to testify in a Court of Justice.*

We feel that this question is one of universal interest,—affecting some of the most important and dearest rights of man in his political state; and we are confident that the merits or defects of the existing rule are, for the most part, within the comprehension of every reflecting person. The whole law of evidence, or, in other words, judicial modes of discovering truth,—whether by an inspection of written records, or by an examination of oral witnesses,—is but one department of that great branch of human study, the science of logic. A practised lawyer would most readily conduct the actual examination of living witnesses; but any skilful logician might equally well reason out the principles of this chapter of that science.

The end and aim of the whole law of evidence, (however monstrous such an assertion may appear to a novice in its study,) is, at the present day, *the development of all the facts and circumstances material to a full understanding of the*

*case or trial.* Such, however, was not in former times the true and sole intent of the rules of evidence, as established by law. History clearly demonstrates that, in instances without number, these rules have been framed for purposes foreign and inimical to such a design ; — for the propagation of some religious or political dogma, — for the discouragement and punishment of some fancied heresy or error, — for the wants of an arbitrary government, or of a rotten and tottering ecclesiastical establishment. Such were the rules adopted, and which are yet more or less enforced in England, rendering a dissenter, a Quaker, a non-conformist, an excommunicant, a Jew, or a Pagan incompetent to testify. But in more recent times, all reasonable men, and all respectable tribunals, admit that the discovery of full and absolute truth is the legitimate purpose of the law of evidence, — of all judicial examination, — subject only to the restraints of *relevancy* and *materiality*.

Such being the acknowledged fact, we are furnished with a safe and simple standard whereby to measure and estimate the value or rectitude of any rule of law whatsoever in regard to evidence ; and we are justified in pronouncing any rule false and absurd, which departs from this measure of value.

It would be easy for us to apply this rule of criticism to the before-mentioned rule of law, and, as we think, expose their inconsistency. But we prefer a less rigorous and methodical discussion of the question, and shall therefore proceed to enforce, by a variety of arguments, the doctrine which we cherish in this matter, namely, that *it is wrong and absurd to exclude a witness on the score of Atheism, or any other religious disqualification.* We will first briefly state the arguments, and then examine them at greater length. They are as follows : —

1. The rule of exclusion implies that the excluded individual is incompetent to utter the truth, and wholly unworthy of credit.
2. It implies that the jury (who weigh the evidence) would of course believe the witness, and be misled by his testimony, and that his perjury would escape detection.
3. It is an infringement of the fundamental rights of jurors as the judges of evidence.
4. It virtually invites crime, by rendering the victim of injury in certain cases incompetent to prove the wrongs inflicted.
5. It operates as an outlawry, or ban of excommunication from legal protection, on certain classes of society.

6. It inflicts grievous injury upon third persons, in nowise connected with the witness, beyond their dependence on information within his knowledge.

7. It inflicts a penalty on certain modes of belief, and legislates on opinions.

8. It takes for granted that a witness cannot speak the truth from any other motive than religious principles.

9. It compels courts to the commission of one of two absurdities, namely, either first, to take second hand evidence in regard to the witness's past belief, as proof of his present creed, or second, to exercise inquisitorial power, and ask the witness to impeach himself.

10. It rates the testimony of a falsehearted pretender to religion above that of an honest and virtuous disbeliever.

11. It is impracticable, — and, by a host of exceptions in its administration, exhibits its own errors and unreasonableness.

12. It violates the fundamental doctrines of our constitution.

Having considered these points, we shall then attempt to show in what manner the removal of the existing restraint would be advantageous, — in that such a change would first, simplify the law of evidence; second, restore their rights to the jury; third, discriminate between divers degrees of credibility; fourth, and thus furnish the light of partial truth as a guide to belief; and that, fifth, it would silence well founded complaints of oppression.

It may be proper for us, at the very outset, to state, that, in point of fairness, the advocates of the existing rule are bound to prove its necessity or value in the administration of justice, because it is in open and manifest derogation of that equality of rights upon which all our institutions are founded. The burden of proof is properly upon them, and not upon us; and should they undertake the vindication of their doctrine *de novo*, we feel assured that they could not make out, for they never yet have made out, a tolerable case. But the law of which we complain being in existence, and in full operation, and any change thereof requiring for its production a corresponding and previous modification of the general opinion, we must ourselves assume the *onus probandi*, and prove the case we would make out.

It would seem that the mere enunciation of the long list of arguments just given, obvious as many of them are to the most careless reasoner, would be sufficient to satisfy our readers that

the law is in the wrong. But those arguments may be presented in greater extent and with a force vastly increased. We will take them up in their order.

1. Does not the rule of exclusion imply that the witness on whom it operates cannot speak the truth, and is wholly unworthy of credit? On what other ground is he excluded? The object of the trial is the discovery of truth. If it were supposed that the witness could further this object, he would be admitted, not excluded. If it were believed that he could, in any degree, however small, shed the light of truth upon any material fact, he would be admitted. The amount of evidence to be obtained from a witness is wholly immaterial, except as a matter of economy. He may know but a single fact, how minute soever, and if it be but material to the train of proof, if it but form a link, though the least, in the chain of evidence, the testimony is essential, and must be had. In regard to unbelievers, therefore, the presumption of law is either that they are utterly incapable of knowing, or else wholly unable or indisposed to utter a single particle of truth, that they are, "*intus, et in cute,*" unworthy of human credit.

Need we ask whether this presumption of law be founded on fact? We trust that all reasoning on this point is needless. For the honor of the race, we would believe that there is no visionary so wild, no disciple of the doctrine of total depravity so ultra, as to imagine that any class of men are wholly abandoned to mendacity,—liars from the love of it, and incapable of truth. To suppose such a state of things is a libel on human nature, equally false and ridiculous. If there be implanted in the universal heart any principle whatsoever, it is the love of truth. As if the great Father of us all regarded *veracity* as the element of all law and order, he has written it all over the universe, stamped it upon the soul of man, and there enshrined and clothed it with a living sanctity. There are individuals who at times forget and violate this fundamental law of our being. But there is ever a motive for mendacity, some object to be accomplished, whether of advantage to be gained or of injury to be avoided. Objectless, motiveless, wanton, and unprovoked falsehood is a moral anomaly, as rare and as strange as an unsphered planet. For it is not merely a violation of our constitutional law as rational beings, but an actual breach of all the restraining principles and motives by which we are surrounded and hedged in on all sides, as by walls of fire. Even

mendacity induced by corrupt motives is malevolent, — puts at hazard self-respect, good name and standing among men, and security from legal vengeance, and exposes the guilty actor to contempt and contumely, to exclusion from the confidence and society of his fellows, to the loss of all social delights, and to the heavy hand of the outraged law.

Such being the facts in regard to our allegiance to *the true*, is it not false and unphilosophical to charge upon Atheists, or any other class, an incapacity for truth, and therefore expel them from our courts? Is it not, moreover, a legal declaration that neither morality, nor honor, nor friendly regard, nor the love of reputation, nor the fear of punishment, nor all these combined, furnish any sufficient inducement to speak the truth, in the absence of religious faith? Such most assuredly would appear to be the significance of the legal rule.

Now we ask not a more conclusive exposition of the utter fallacy of this *presumptio juris*, than is furnished by the everyday practice of the very advocates of the rule of exclusion.

They enter on the study of history, and call to their aid the great historians of England and France, Voltaire, Gibbon, or Hume, without a thought of impeaching their fidelity or veracity. So also in scientific inquiry, whether in political economy, physics, or any other department of knowledge, what student would dream of inquiring into the religious notions of an author, as in any degree affecting the credibility of his statements? And in social life, amongst acquaintances and friends, in the absence of perverting motives and temptations to falsify, all men are received as trustworthy, and believed without hesitation. Thus strikingly in contradiction are their conduct and doctrines in common life, and in judicial examinations. Thus loudly doth day unto day declare the fallacy and folly of their doctrine of exclusion.

We are brought then to the conclusion that the testimony of Atheists may be credible, that Atheists, like other men, will speak the truth when unbiassed by disturbing motives, and that, therefore, to exclude them from courts upon a contrary supposition, is both unreasonable and unjust.

2. In the second place, we maintain that the rule of exclusion implies that the perjury of the excluded witness would escape detection, that he would be believed, and so mislead the jury, or whoever else is the judge of the evidence.

If there be a class of witnesses incapable of telling the truth,  
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it must be a fact so notorious, as to affect all men alike, and no possible danger could therefore result from their admission ; for who would attach credit to any statement coming from such a quarter ? This seems very clearly to demonstrate the uselessness of exclusion on the doctrine examined in our first argument. But supposing that there is a possibility of believing the false testimony of the excluded witness, is it therefore proper to remove this danger by expulsion ? Cannot sufficient confidence be reposed in the shrewdness of cross-examining counsel, in the sound sense of jurors, and in the experience and wisdom of the bench, to render safe the examination of the most skilful perjurer ? Consider for a moment the circumstances under which evidence is given and received. The witness appears in court, passes through solemn and impressive formalities before the examination commences, understands fully the penal consequences of detected perjury, ascends the witness-stand in full view of the bar, the jury, the judge, and the gathered crowd, testifies to facts, or in regard to circumstances, which, in most cases, are well known to other witnesses, and after having concluded his story, is re-examined, point by point, by opposing counsel, with a wakeful and suspicious keenness of inquiry, which leaves no doubtful statement unquestioned, no weak or unguarded remark unscanned or unassailed, no inconsistency or contradiction unnoticed ; he is moreover subjected to a like ordeal on the part of both judge and jury, until he has been, as it were, threshed, winnowed, and sifted, again and again ; his story is afterwards examined and commented upon by both lawyer and judge, every word, every look, every suspicious peculiarity of manner, made the subject of argument and instruction. In how large a proportion of cases can falsehood escape detection, in its passage through such a process as we have described ? Unless we suppose that the witness is a consummate villain, case-hardened in iniquity, dead to all fear or sensibility, astute enough to set at defiance the ordinary laws of probability, and the sagacity of the most practised officer of court, there is not one chance in a hundred that his perjury will pass undiscovered. Falsehood is cowardly, inconsistent, self-distrustful. It blushes, and stammers, and agitates the nerves, and looks through the downcast or averted eyes, and contradicts itself, or else assumes a defying, audacious, over positive manner, and feeling the peril of multiplying the circumstances of a narrative, either adopts a bold generality of statement that betrays apprehension,

or attempts a fool-hardy minuteness of relation, which at once increases the probabilities of exposure, or indicates a fear of disbelief. On the other hand, truth is serene and self-balanced, consistent with itself, harmonious in all its parts, more and more radiating its holy light, the more it develops the series of facts and circumstances in evidence, and securing belief alike without effort or apprehension. So unlike are these great antagonist principles, and so certain is each to manifest without disguise its genuine character. And yet, does the law proceed upon the fear that they may be wholly confounded, and mistaken the one for the other; and this, not by a few individuals of doubtful knowledge, or questionable sagacity, but by long-trained, keen-eyed, and intelligent men!

3. And now by an easy transit we pass to the *third* argument, namely, that this rule is a violation of the fundamental rights of jurors, as the proper and constituted judges of the evidence.

The organization of our courts of common law, with the exception of justices' courts of small jurisdiction, divides the cognizance of all cases between the judge and the jury, to each of which branches of the court is assigned a distinct and appropriate sphere of power and duty. The theory is, that all questions of law are to be exclusively considered and decided by the judge, and all questions and matters of fact (or, in other words, the evidence) are to be settled solely by the jury.

The value and convenience of this organization, and distribution of powers, may, by different individuals, be very differently estimated. The friends of popular government, and of liberal political doctrines, cannot place too high a value on the institution of juries, and on jury trials. But, whatever be the importance of the distinction referred to, it will not be questioned that, so long as it exists, it ought to be consistently and thoroughly enforced. Commingling jurisdictions and clashing rights are great practical mischiefs, introducing confusion and destroying harmonious and friendly coöperation between the rival parties to the strife.

Every professional man would regret and censure any attempt, on the part of juries, to usurp and exercise the functions of the bench, by sitting in judgment on questions of law in disregard of the instruction of the judge. In like manner ought we to regard any judicial usurpation, any attempt by the judge, to intermeddle with mere matters of fact, and thus trespass on

the legitimate domain of the jury. If the distinction between law and fact, bench and panel, judge and juror, be really worthy of preservation, it ought to be as rigidly defended upon the right hand as upon the left, from judicial invasion as from jurors' trespass.

The doctrine of the books upon this matter is very readily learned and stated.

The province of the jury, according to leading authorities, is "to ascertain the existence of facts by means of the judgment which they form of the credibility of witnesses, and by the inferences they make from the circumstances submitted to their consideration." "They are supposed to be peculiarly well qualified by their experience of the conduct, affairs, and dealings of mankind, and the manners and customs of society" to discharge this duty.

It is said that "the law has no scales wherein to weigh different degrees of probability," and that "as the power of discriminating between truth and falsehood depends rather upon the exercise of an intelligent and experienced mind, than on the application of artificial and technical rules, the law has delegated this important office to a jury of the country." The same excellent authority asserts that "it is the great object of the law, that the jury should be fully possessed of all the facts and circumstances of the case."

And now it remains to inquire whether the worth of any man's testimony, its weight, its credibility,—be he Atheist or Christian, a Paul or a Paine,—is not a question of fact. We do not mean to inquire whether it is, in the ordinary process of trials, regarded as a question of fact. We know that such is far from being the case. That the testimony of Atheists, and of those who do not believe in a state of moral rewards and punishments, is wholly unworthy of credit is *a presumption of law*; that is to say, it is, in legal contemplation, a fact so glaring, that it shall never be entrusted to the scrutiny of jurors; but having been once promulgated from the Bench, it remains established forever. Our inquiry is this,—'Is not the question of credit really and truly a question of fact?' Is not the amount of belief properly bestowed upon any witness a matter for those only to consider, to whom belongs the whole field of evidence? We have shown the utter absurdity of condemning as false the whole testimony of any class of men. It follows, then, that the excluded class may, at times, be en-

titled to some credit. Of the extent and amount of that credit, who ought to form an opinion? But suppose it to be strongly probable that an Atheist would perjure himself, is it not vastly more proper for each individual case to be examined and judged of, in its own light, on its own circumstances, by a jury familiar with all that may guide them to a correct estimate, than for a universal ban of excommunication to go forth against a whole class of men, including individuals of every conceivable moral phasis, and diversity of character?

4. But graver objections may be brought against the rule of exclusion; for it holds out to crime the temptation of impunity. A more serious accusation could in no case be brought against human law.

Suppose an act should be reported to our legislature by the Judiciary Committee, providing that "in all cases of wrong or violence done to the person or property of an Atheist, provided the same be properly concealed from the observation and knowledge of all persons except the victim thereof, the perpetrator, be he homicide, robber, incendiary, ravisher, thief, or simple trespasser, shall go harmless of legal infliction." How would such a proposition be received in a Christian deliberative assembly? Would not a silent horror, or a loud outburst of indignant humanity succeed its announcement? Nevertheless such is, by force of this rule of evidence, the possible operation, at least, of the existing law.

5. Correlative to this last named objection is another. This mistaken rule operates as a decree of outlawry, a sort of Druidical, or papal ban of excommunication from the protection and immunities of law and government.

The Druidical priesthood punished an offender against their rules with a species of interdict, by which he was driven from the society and succor of his fellow beings,

"from food and fire  
Cut off by sacerdotal ire."

And by the old English law, in certain cases, the ban of outlawry was passed upon some derelict offender, by which it was declared lawful for all good citizens to slay him whenever and wherever he might be found.

Analogous to these barbarous modes of procedure, in its practical operation upon the Atheist, is the present law of evidence, whereby he is rendered wholly incapable of availing

himself, in his hour of need, of legal protection. The torch of the incendiary may flame against his mansion, or the dagger of the assassin may strike at his life,—but in vain does he utter the accents of fear or complaint,—he is neither to be believed, nor protected.

Now in fairness, and on acknowledged principles of political right, the Atheist is by this law absolved from all the obligations of the social compact. That compact is strictly reciprocal; the citizen being bound to allegiance and the government to protection, and a failure of performance on either side rescinds the agreement, and restores the contracting parties to their original condition. So long, therefore, as the Atheist finds no protection from the law, but rather persecution, so long is he under no obligation of duty or obedience.

Thus is it manifest that this exclusionary rule is, to a certain extent, a dissolution of the bonds of society, a severance of the social compact, the body politic, and of course revolutionary in its character. To such consequences are we led by erroneous legislation.

If any circumstance were wanting to aggravate the miseries of this system, it might be found in the fact, that the law is not the result of legislative enactment, is not the act of the representatives of the popular will, but is of judicial origin,—a rule established by the judges in a half barbarous age, and which therefore forms a portion of the common law. If the rule were founded on right reason and sound policy, or were necessary to the due administration of justice, its origin might not influence our regard for it; but as it is false in principle and mischievous in practice, we cannot but look upon it with increased distaste, when we remember that it is a creature of judicial creation, whose existence for a single year depends upon the will of the Bench.

6. But the injury which the law inflicts is not confined to the immediate subjects of its operation. The injury extends to third persons, to men of all creeds and modes of faith, to every individual whose cause in any way depends upon the testimony of a disbeliever. Instances are frequently occurring wherein life or property or the efficacy of criminal law, one or all, are dependent upon a single witness, and wherein they must be sacrificed, if that witness be excluded. Who shall pretend to enumerate the crowds of those who have fallen victims to the law, because their sole, or their most important witness has been excluded as incompetent? Who shall count

the lives, or the wealth, the rights and the tears that have been thus wasted and lost? Who shall attempt to reckon the multitude of crimes and of criminals that have escaped "unwhipped of justice" for similar reasons?

This law does not rest content with inflicting injury upon the living; it is made to disturb the very ashes of the dead. Thus in an important case in the Courts of Connecticut, in a contest between the devisee under a will, and the heir at law, the heir at law alleged that the will of the testator was not duly executed, because one of the subscribing witnesses did not believe in the obligation of an oath. The Court, having satisfied themselves that the witness did not, either at the time of subscribing or of making probate of the will, believe in the obligation of an oath, decided that he was incompetent, and the will not duly executed. The will was therefore set aside, the intentions of the testator wholly violated, and the devisee stripped of his rightful property. This is a case that may daily occur. Attesting witnesses are called in to witness a will or a deed, without any inquiry as to their religion. We make this use of our domestics, of the standers by, of strangers, without fear or hesitation, and yet by so doing we run the imminent risk of neutralizing our most solemn acts and deliberate intentions.

Such results as these would prove the law to be unjust, even were it true that disbelief is an offence properly cognizable and punishable by the civil authorities. Human tribunals have no right to visit either the sins of the fathers upon the children, or of the guilty upon the innocent.

We have been taught to abhor those penal statutes of the mother country, which, besides depriving the traitor of life, strip his descendants of the family titles, honors, and estate. But what consistency is there in complaining of attainder, corruption of blood, and confiscation, while we calmly submit, in other cases, to be stripped and plundered and abused on account of the errors or offences of our neighbors, without even the pretence of privity or relationship between us.

7. And here the inquiry comes up, can the law rightfully interfere in any way with matters of opinion, and undertake to control the intellectual freedom of the people, by attaching pains, penalties, or disabilities to particular modes of thought or belief?

The moral and political wrong of punishing for opinion's

sake, few in this country will openly deny or excuse ; especially in matters of religion, in which the individual is responsible only to his Creator. To say nothing of the tendency of this practice to generate hypocrisy in certain timid classes, who make false professions a security against danger, or of its still stronger tendency to propagate the illegal opinions, by arousing in their favor public sympathy and compassion, it is a gross interference with subjects utterly beyond the jurisdiction of human legislation, and an attempt to reduce the citizen to a bondage more galling than manual servitude. That act, or state, of the mind which we call *belief*, is not voluntary, nor within the authority of the individual himself who exercises or possesses it. It is the result of evidence, of argument ; and as necessarily follows after plenary proof, as fatigue attends upon bodily labor, or refreshment on healthful repose. How can belief be compelled or extorted ? Suppose an ignorant man to be assured by a geometrician that the square of the hypotenuse of a right angled triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides ; he does not comprehend the meaning of the proposition. Should he be commanded to believe it, he might be astonished or intimidated, but no change of belief would ensue. And if the ignoramus in turn should seize the geometrician by his throat and command him, on penalty of death, to abjure his faith in the proposition, the threat and the command would be alike unproductive of conviction. Verbal assent may be extorted, but the understanding and heart go not, in such case, with the lips.

The great and crowning glory of modern times has been the gradual adoption of this doctrine of intellectual liberty, the removal, one after another, of legislative and judicial impositions and restraints on thought and belief, the withdrawal of ancient claims to supernatural jurisdiction. Something remains yet to be done for the completion of this noble reform, and no item of change is more imperatively demanded, for the general good, or the general credit, than the removal of all religious tests in courts of justice.

8. Another erroneous proposition implied by this odious law of evidence is, that a witness cannot, or will not, speak the truth, from any other motive than religious principles, from the fear of punishment or the hope of reward in the moral government of God. That the law implies this, is sufficiently proved by the act of exclusion, unless we suppose that the law of evi-

dence is intended to accomplish other purposes besides the discovery and development of truth.

Is not this implied proposition palpably erroneous? If it be true that in common life there are motives apart from religion, of sufficient force, in ordinary cases, to regulate human conduct, then is it equally true that those motives might be safely relied on, under similar circumstances, in the administration of law. There are such motives. Every human being in civilized society feels himself to be an integral part of the body social and politic, identified in a great degree in interest with its institutions, and with the safety and happiness of all its parts. He is in his nature gregarious. To herd with his species is a necessity of his constitution. Their respect and kindness are essential to his comfort. He is furnished with certain notions of fitness and duty, among which, deeply planted in his heart, (as we have before stated,) is veneration for truth. He has benevolence, he has honor, he has self-respect, he has a love of ease and of safety, and a discreet fear of danger; all which are obviously principles that would be called into exercise in the mind of a witness, even when there might be some motive, of passion or interest, tempting him to swerve from the straight path of truth. But in a majority of cases the suit and its result are a matter of entire indifference to the witness, and his testimony is therefore given without prejudice. Let us see in what manner an unbelieving witness would be acted upon by motives apart from religion.

Solemnly pledged, under the pains and penalties of perjury, to utter the truth, he knows that if he be detected in falsehood, he forfeits at once the respect and good will of his fellow citizens, and all the enjoyments coupled therewith, and becomes an object of public odium, scorn, and contempt, as a traitor to society, and a violator of its organic law. His gregarious propensity and his love of approbation here operate as restraints upon mendacity. But the probability is, that, in most cases, he would never think of falsifying. Truth is the silent, instinctive, constant law of his nature, operating without his consciousness, or if observed, exciting the profound homage of an honest heart. His regard for his fellow men would, in like manner, impel him, with or without reflection, to avoid all injury or offence against their safety or happiness. His self-respect, and his feeling of honor, would strongly tend to guide him in the path of honesty and veracity. A wilful liar lives ever in the

atmosphere of his own contempt, degraded in his own eyes. There is no dearer treasure to a reflecting and reasonable man than the approbation of his own conscience and judgment. Next to this, in most cases, ranks that just regard for the opinions of the wise and worthy, which is properly called *honor*,—a principle sometimes more efficient than even a sense of duty,—a principle which is in most cases safe, because identical with the common sentiment of the race. And finally, the terrors of the law, appealing to the fears, to the love of ease and quiet, to the grosser, but on that account the more powerful instincts of the human animal, would of themselves, in most instances, be abundantly adequate to secure the veracity of witnesses. So many and so various are the motives to truth, even without appealing to the sanctions of religion. After a deliberate inspection of their array, we think that few men will deny that courts might safely rely upon their sufficiency in all cases, where the witness is not operated on by some known and strong temptation to falsehood.

If such be the fair conclusion, it is clearly unphilosophical and unnecessary to require in every case additional motives or sanctions. To insist upon an accumulation, in every case, of all known or possible safeguards of veracity, of the highest possible amount of moral constraint, is manifestly unreasonable.

9. This rule cannot be enforced by the court in which a witness is produced, except by the commission of one or the other of two equally absurd and improper acts, in obtaining evidence in regard to this belief; which two acts are either first, to collect at second hand, reports touching the witness's religious opinions at a former period, or secondly, to call upon the witness in person to impeach himself.

The first named mode cannot be safely or consistently adopted, because it is not, what the law ordinarily requires, the best evidence which the nature of the case admits of; it is indirect and second hand, and does not relate to time present. Reports in regard to a man's religious opinions can only be founded on his former declarations or admissions. Those declarations may, by the lapse of time, have become wholly inapplicable to, and undescriptive of his present opinions. They may have been misconstrued at the time they were uttered, so as, for example, to have been taken as the avowal of deliberate and full conviction, when in fact they were mere hypothetical or argumentative statements, or confessions of occasional and distressing

doubts and uncertainties ; or when they may have been simply descriptions of that temporary and transitory condition of the mind, which occurs in the course of its study, before reason and conscience have settled down upon the firm basis of faith. They may have been misunderstood, on account of the poverty either of the speaker's language, or of the hearer's understanding. Or they may now be most grievously misremembered, and in their present repetition, subjected to the same difficulties of language and danger of misconstruction as before. And more than all, if they are statements calculated to prove the witness *imadmissible* for want of religious qualification, they cannot be taken as true without violating the reason of the law, because they are mere repetitions of the statements of a person declared incapable of speaking truly. Unless it be supposed that absolute falsehood undergoes a chemico-moral change by passing through a second mouth, and is, by a kind of human filtration, deprived of its offensive properties ; unless, in short, that which is false, when said by one person, becomes true when repeated by another, — those second hand confessions of faith must, on the theory of the rule of exclusion, be rejected as untrue.

The second method of obtaining a knowledge of the witness's belief, by direct examination of himself in regard thereto, is not a whit more consistent or proper.

It is always wrong to call upon a witness to exclude himself. Inquisition into his private theological notions is tyranny. This is a matter between the man and his God. *Acts*, not opinions, — *conduct*, not fancies or imaginations, are the sole subject-matter of legal cognizance. To place a man before the bar of justice, and then call upon him to stigmatize and brand himself with disgrace and legal infamy ; ask him to reveal some unknown or unsuspected opinion by force of which he is to be expelled from court, and held up to public odium, — is not less tyrannical and oppressive than to torture him upon the wheel, or by any other instrument, in the dungeons of a Spanish Inquisition.

But apart from the injustice of the procedure, it is so strangely inconsistent with the theory of the law itself, as we have developed it, as to excite our unqualified surprise, that it could have ever been resorted to. The inconsistency is in first supposing the witness, if an unbeliever, incapable of speaking the truth, and then inquiring of him what his creed is, and placing confidence in his answers : — in first furnishing him (if he be

liable to exclusion) with a motive for falsifying, yet believing statements made under its impulse, and afterwards refusing credit to what he says, without any motive or temptation to pervert the truth. Nor is this all. Suppose him, on the preliminary examination, to make a frank confession of his unfortunate creed, thus speaking the truth in defiance of expected obloquy, is not this veracious frankness enough to entitle him to our belief in regard to matters in which he has no personal interest? Yet in such case he is excluded in consequence of telling the truth. Suppose on the other hand that, when examined touching his creed, he makes false pretensions to full Christian faith. In such case, his mendacity is his passport to credit, and he actually *lies* himself into the confidence and good graces of the court. Thus the liar is believed because he lies, while the honest man is disbelieved because he speaks the truth. Thus, also, the law presumes that the Atheist will speak the truth, when there is a known motive for falsehood, but will falsify when there is every motive for veracity.

10. The result of this rule is, that the testimony of a false-hearted reprobate, who hypocritically pretends to Christianity, is, *in the scale of the law*, of greater weight than that of an individual of whose life and conversation nothing is known but good: the declarations of the notorious liar,—the double-dyed, incorrigible villain,—the blackest and foulest gallows-bird that goes unhung, a pest to society, a very plague-spot and rankling sore upon the body politic, are of greater value than those of an honest and upright citizen, a kind, generous, honorable man, whose veracity has never been impeached, but whose unpardonable and damning offence is, that, through some defect or peculiarity in the structure or education of his mind, his theological notions do not conform to the general opinion. We say “*in the scale of the law*,” because when thrown into the balance of justice, or of common sense, it is not so.

11. This rule of law is demonstrated to be founded on erroneous principles, by the impossibility of applying it with consistency and uniformity to practice.

The basis of the rule is the assumption that certain persons are incapable of speaking the truth, or utterly unworthy of credit. Starting from this proposition, the administrator of the law is obliged, as we have shown, at his very first step, to contradict himself, in order to ascertain if the witness belongs to that class of persons, by his own declarations and confessions

made *in propria persona*, at the examination, or repeated at that time by some one who heard him make them at some former period. And not only so. In a multitude of other instances the rule is expressly or tacitly annulled and disregarded. Some of these will be particularly named, and the reason rendered for the exception will be found invariably applicable to the entire doctrine itself. We will enumerate some of the cases in which the rule is broken, and afterwards consider a few of them more particularly. Such are first, criminal complaints on applications for warrants; second, affidavits to hold absconding creditors to bail; third, poor debtors' oath; fourth, affidavits in court, for continuance, &c.; fifth, trustee answers; sixth, oaths under the assignment law; seventh, all records or copies certified by a sworn public officer, as a justice of the peace, notary, &c.; eighth, oaths under the revenue laws, &c. &c. We might greatly increase this significant catalogue, but our limits restrain us, and we must abbreviate our comments.

First. *In criminal complaints.* Upon the application of any aggrieved party to a judge or justice, during the preliminary examination no magistrate ever inquires into the religious notions of the complainant. Nor would such an inquiry, according to modern decisions, be lawful. The complaint is heard, and if a case be presented that calls for legal interference, a warrant issues thereupon, as of course. It was, indeed, formerly doubted whether the complaint of unbelievers, excommunicants, Quakers, &c., could be entertained, or made the basis of criminal process. But now the rule and practice of admission are well settled. If an Atheist, on whom violent hands have been laid, comes bruised and bleeding into court, and prays for process against his assailant, a warrant is charitably granted, *because justice could not otherwise be done.* But mark the impotent conclusion; when the culprit has been arrested and is brought to trial, the mouth of the complainant is judicially sealed, his voice is silenced, though every gash and gaping wound may plead for justice; and although by excluding his testimony, suffering innocence is doomed to go unprotected, and the guilty prisoner is allowed to escape. Thus is the wrath of the law aroused and her hand filled with thunderbolts, only that the victim may go free, and her power be defied. Thus is the promise of protection so treacherously held forth, most cruelly violated,—“though kept to the ear, yet broken to the hope.”

If, on preliminary process, a witness is believed in order that justice may be done, he ought to be credited, for the like reason, at any subsequent stage of the proceedings. The exception is just, not as an exception, but as being the rightful application of right principles; it is just, not because attended by any peculiar facts or circumstances, but because no evidence material to a case should ever be excluded to the inevitable hazard of right and justice.

Second. There is a provision of our law (Massachusetts,) which enables any creditor, who has reason to suspect that his debtor is intending to abscond, on making oath to that fact, to hold him to bail. This provision is intended for the security of the pecuniary claims of all creditors, without regard to personal character or religious belief, and is, in practice, extended as readily to an Atheist as to a Christian. No inquiry is made, or could be made, touching the faith of the affiant creditor. The law supposes in this case that the property of one man is as valuable as the property of any other man, and that a Christian's dollar of debt is no more entitled to legal protection than the same debt of an infidel. No one complains of this uniformity of security; on the contrary, it is universally admitted to be just. It is manifest that trade and commerce would cease, if the law did not afford uniform protection to all classes of citizens in contracts relating thereto.

Now we would ask, is there any reason in favor of admitting the affidavit of an unbelieving creditor in this case, which would not be as forcible in favor of admitting an unbelieving witness in all cases? On the contrary, there are objections to the first, which are not applicable to the latter; for while a mere witness is, in the majority of cases, an indifferent and disinterested person, with no motive for concealing the truth, the creditor is a direct party in interest, swearing in his own behalf. Admirable consistency this. Furthermore it may be said that the exclusion of unbelieving creditors from the right of affidavit would be a mere pecuniary injury, and confined to the party himself; whereas the exclusion of a witness as often inflicts injury upon the rights of personal liberty and safety as on those of property, and extends the wrong to third persons.

The pretended object of this exception to the general rule of credibility, or rather its reason and excuse, is *the security of property*. Let any advocate of the existing rule show, if he can, why the security of property does not require the admis-

sion as a witness in his own behalf of him who has been robbed, plundered, or defrauded, and without whose testimony the cheat, thief, or robber may escape punishment.

Third. In the third class of exceptions which we have named, — oaths under the insolvent law, — humanity and good sense alike vindicate the relaxation of the rule of credibility. If the benefit of the insolvent law were limited to "true believers," if the infidel might not be admitted to take the poor debtor's oath, and thereby discharge himself from jail, then might Christian liberality be displayed in a form consonant with the rule of exclusion, by the perpetual imprisonment of the disbelieving debtor; then might the efficacy of dungeon walls and iron gratings and prison fare, as proofs of the existence, or moral government, of God, be fully tested, as in those good old times of the stake and faggot and solitary cell.

But in the name of consistency, let us ask, why, supposing unbelievers incapable of veracity, or so far abandoned to falsehood as to be unfit for examination by lawyers, jurors, and judges, — why should their oaths at any time avail them? Especially, may it be inquired, why should their declarations on oath be credited, when made under the impulse of the most powerful temptations to falsehood, — the desire of escaping present confinement as well as future liability for embarrassing debts? To credit any individual at such a time, is to admit that he might be safely believed at any time, so long as his statements remained unimpeached by conflicting testimony.

What is the reason assigned, in this case, for the exception? It is *humane regard for personal liberty*; the desire of putting an end to an otherwise interminable imprisonment. And in this "opening of prison doors" to those that are in bondage, we recognise and hail the spirit of the Gospel. But is the value of human liberty fluctuating and uncertain? at one time worthy of legal protection, yet beneath regard at another? Why, then, is it at one time scrupulously protected, while at another it is entirely disregarded? The poor debtor is rescued from jail after a short-lived confinement; but how many are there incarcerated, perhaps for long years, by reason of a loss of evidence occasioned by the exclusion of a witness on the ground of religious belief. The debtor himself might, at the trial of his case, have successfully defended against the claim on which he is now confined, had his evidence not depended upon incompetent witnesses. So of that poor fellow, who has for these

five years been hammering stone in yonder State Prison ;— never would he have seen the interior of that dismal abode, had not the witness of his innocence been excluded from Court by the tender conscience of the law. Amazing humanity ! surprising conscientiousness ! admirable consistency !

The fourth class of exceptions is found in the common practice of Courts. Various motions are made, or requests presented, founded on a statement of facts. For example, a material witness is unexpectedly absent, so that the party cannot now have a fair trial, and delay is therefore sought. The motion for delay must set forth the facts relied on, and must be sworn to by the party or by his attorney. Many other similar kinds of affidavit are in frequent use. They are always received without question or hesitation, and Courts would in such cases as soon inquire into the pecuniary credit, as into the theology of the affiant. This rule is the more liberal in view of the fact that the party testifying is swearing in his own favor, and that moreover no disproof of his statement, except the counter-affidavit of the opposite party, is ever allowed.

Why this liberality ? Is it not that form may yield to substance, and because otherwise great inconvenience and hardship would be inflicted ? All that we argue for is demanded with equal earnestness by the same considerations.

Similar observations, were it expedient to pursue these illustrations, might be made in regard to the answers of individuals summoned into Court to render an account of the property of third persons supposed to be entrusted to them ;— in regard to the affidavit required by law from the assignors of property under the statute regulating the assignment and distribution of the estate of insolvent debtors ;— in regard to the records, certificates, copies of records and papers, made by certain sworn officers, such as Notaries, &c. ;— and in regard to oaths required by the revenue laws, as well as in regard to many other instances of departure from the rigid intolerance of the rule of exclusion,— in all which instances, because of their frequency, it has been found wholly incompatible with either justice or convenience, to insist upon the administration of the old law in a thorough and consistent manner, and in none of which is there to be found a principle, reason, or apology, for giving credit to the infidel, which does not exist in all cases wherein the question of admissibility, on the ground of religious belief, is raised.

Now we contend that such a multitude of exceptions, in common practice, amount to a demonstration of the folly and error of the rule. A principle of law which, in nine cases out of ten, is found impracticable and intolerable, must be at war with the opinions of mankind, and ought to be wholly annulled. Especially true is this, when, (as in the present instance,) a careful examination of the exceptions reveals the surprising fact, that they are justified by no argument, (excepting perhaps greater frequency of occurrence,) which is not true in every instance where the rule is enforced; so that if the exception be properly made, the whole substantive doctrine should be abandoned as untenable. There is a very absurd maxim, which says that "an exception proves the rule." But no sophist was ever found so far lost to common sense, as to maintain that a multitude of exceptions prove the rule to be anything but bad.

12. We now pass to the consideration of our final argument, which is, that the exclusion of witnesses by religious tests is virtually a violation of certain fundamental principles of our political constitution. A brief consideration of the manner in which the rule of exclusion operates will give clearness to this argument.

We have already seen that the rule is hostile to the doctrine of equal rights,—that it endangers life, liberty, property, and happiness, by placing certain persons out of legal protection, and by rendering them, in certain cases, the certain and helpless victims of force and fraud, thus rescinding the reciprocal contract of protection and obedience between the government and the governed. We have also seen that certain modes of belief are treated as offences against the safety and happiness of society, and against the law of the land, that penalties, in the form of disabilities and legal pains, are inflicted upon those opinions, and that in a strange and cruel manner the individuals, who entertain those opinions, are arraigned therefor, subjected to examination by Courts, and punished by infamy and expulsion from the tribunals of law, without previous notice, or indictment, without opportunity of defence, without a jury, and in fact without a trial.

Now let us look at some of the fundamental doctrines of our Bill of Rights, which are manifestly violated by this rule.

The preamble declares that the body politic is a compact, each party to which is bound by reciprocal obligations. The first

Article declares that all men are born free and equal, and that all alike possess the inalienable rights of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties, and of possessing and protecting property. The tenth Article sets forth the right of every citizen to legal protection as to his person and his property. The eleventh Article declares that every citizen, who is injured in person, property, or character, should, on recourse to the law, find there a *certain* remedy, freely without purchase, completely without denial, promptly without delay. The twelfth Article declares that no subject shall be held to answer for any crime or offence, until he has been furnished with a plain, full, substantial, and formal description thereof; nor be compelled to accuse or furnish evidence against himself, nor be deprived of any proof favorable to himself, nor of a fair trial where he shall be heard in person or by attorney; and that he shall not be deprived of any right, privilege, or immunity, nor be put out of legal protection, except by the judgment of his peers, or by the law of the land.

Compare this synopsis of our Bill of Rights with the preceding exhibition of the practical operation of the rule of exclusion, and observe the remarkable contrast and conflict between them. Point by point do they meet and clash together, in each instance the Constitution falling beneath the administration of the law. We have not space to run out this comparison as it ought to be pursued, and must therefore leave that task to our readers. But we ask the candid examiner to inquire in regard to this exclusionary law — does it recognise, practically, the doctrine of equal rights? Does it leave to the excluded class the right, the power, the opportunity, of possessing, enjoying, and defending their lives, their liberties, or their property, on terms of equality with those who are not excluded? Is equal legal protection thus furnished by the law to both believer and unbeliever? Does the Atheist, for example, who comes for redress to the law, find there a *certain* remedy, or any remedy at all, for the injury he has sustained? And when a witness (say in prosecuting his complaint in the criminal courts, for some wrong that he has suffered) is stopped by an inquiry into his religious opinions, and called to answer suddenly in regard thereto, well knowing that, if they are of a certain description, his mouth will be shut and the penalty of exclusion enforced, — when this is done without previous warning, and he is called on to furnish evidence against himself, denied the

right of going to a jury with his defence, whether by himself or by an attorney, and finally punished by infamy, outlawry, and expulsion, is not the twelfth Article of the Bill of Rights most flagrantly sinned against, even if it be not, according to the notions of technical lawyers, directly and unequivocally violated?

To questions and objections like these, it is no answer to say that the rule of exclusion existed when our Constitution was framed, and was tacitly recognised by its framers. We admit that it existed then and long previously, and that our ancestors were aware of that fact. But we say that it ought not in reason to exist any longer; that it is hostile to the provisions of the Constitution, to the liberal spirit of Christianity, to sound sense, and, so far as we can judge of common sentiment by the exceptions which are daily made to its doctrine, it is also hostile to the opinions of an enlightened public. Had it, therefore, existed ever since the confusion of tongues at Babel, it ought to be annulled, as a hoary and inveterate offence against justice and liberty.

We shall now state our view in regard to the nature and amount of the needful reform, and its benefits.

The change of law which we desire is not one which shall attach any fixed legal measure of value to the testimony of unbelievers, or declare them more or less worthy of belief. We merely ask that they may be allowed to testify, and that the value of the evidence thus obtained be left to the determination of the jury. Let the fact of the witnesses' belief or unbelief be put in evidence, if it be supposed in any degree to affect their credibility. The worth of that fact is properly within the estimate of the jury, and to them let it go. We are ready to allow, that, under corresponding circumstances, we should trust more implicitly the statements of a Christian, than those of an infidel. It would be an imperfect philosophy, which did not regard a multitude of motives as of greater moral force than one alone. He must be a poor Christian, who does not appreciate the force of those motives which are drawn from faith in God as the omniscient and righteous judge of the moral universe. But we still assert that in common cases, where there is no apparent desire or motive to falsify, it is safe to rely on even the declarations of an Atheist. At all events, jurors are discreet enough to be entrusted with the examination of this subject in the light of each particular case.

Great good would follow the adoption of the doctrine we advocate.

In the first place, it would simplify the law of evidence. This result is manifestly desirable ; but the entire desirableness of reducing that branch of law to greater simplicity can be felt only by one familiar with its present involved and intricate character. Volumes are now filled with rule upon rule, and exception upon exception, and perplexities beyond number ; all which might be compressed within the good sense of a few pages, by the adoption of sound and simple doctrines. In the instance under consideration, one line of declarative law would consign to deserved oblivion a host of absurdities and errors, and whole chapters of refined metaphysics and ingenious sophistry, leaving to the jury in all cases the whole question of credit and trust-worthiness.

2. We have, in discussing this subject, heard, from at least one distinguished lawyer, an objection urged against entrusting to a jury the consideration of the credibility of infidel witnesses. It was to be feared, he said, that Counsel would fall into the habit of disputing in their arguments, how far Christianity furnished motives or securities for veracity, and it might at times be argued that infidelity was equally salutary in its operation on the conscience.

It seems to us that this argument weighs little. Christianity ought not to fear examination, discussion, comparison, whether in Court or out of it, nor is the truth likely to suffer from the keenest scrutiny. If the fact that ingenious Counsel may resort to sophistry and advocate fallacies, instead of adhering to sound logic and fair reasoning, upon any topic, is a real objection to the introduction of that topic as a matter of evidence or argument, then must we at once abandon the whole field of testimony ; for the ingenuity of a well-fed advocate knows no limit or restraint.

On the other hand, the province of the jury being, as we have shown, the facts of a case, and the credibility of witnesses being a fact, the reform which we advocate would restore system and regularity to the administration of law on a point where there is now irregularity and inconsistency.

3. This restoration of usurped dominion would remove from the law one disgraceful blot, the existence of which is expressed in the familiar maxim already quoted, that "the law has no scales in which to weigh probabilities," or in other words,

makes no discrimination between divers degrees of proof, or credibility.

The jury can, in all cases, weigh testimony in the scales of good sense, and estimate it at its real worth.

4. If it were certain that the excluded witness would, if admitted, be guilty, in a majority of particulars, of untruth, yet would it be desirable to admit him; for the advantage to be derived from the fraction of truth which he would communicate. Every fact, however small, every vestige of the truth, how light and evanescent soever it be, is a guide to further inquiry and discovery,—so that from the most artfully constructed mask and disguise of falsehood some feature of hidden truth will flash out and lighten the way to entire revealment.

5. And finally, how much complaint of hardship and oppression, how much appearance of inequality and unfairness, nay, how much actual, real injustice and suffering would be terminated and removed by the desired amendment of the law! In a government like ours, harmony of feeling, affectionate regard for the law as our best common friend, and a fair and equal distribution of legal favors, are of infinite political consequence.

The greatest embarrassment attending this subject is a mere question of mode and form, of practice, not of principle, sometimes stated thus:—

“What!” exclaims the advocate of the existing rule, “*admit a man to swear*, who does not believe in a God? How absurd for such an one to imprecate the vengeance of a Being in whom he has no faith!”

Now we have said nothing about “*admitting a man to swear*.” We speak of admitting men *to testify*. The form of the judicial obligation, the mode of promising to disclose the truth, is quite another question. Oaths are now in many cases exchanged for affirmations. Why should they not be in all, or at least in all instances wherein an oath would seem improper?

The formulary of a solemn pledge is not so difficult a matter as many seem to imagine. And yet most of the opponents of the desired reform oppose it on the ground that an oath in the lips of an infidel is no longer an oath in fact, but an absurd appeal to a non-entity.

We desire, in conclusion, to be understood in this matter. We reverence and love Christianity, and “the life and immor-

tality" which it has "brought to light." Nay, more; we would, with the utmost caution, avoid every measure, every rule, and every practice, tending to promote a reckless spirit of change. It is only as the zealous friends of religion and order, that we advocate the legal reform here recommended.

J. A. B.

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ART. III.—*Twice-Told Tales.* By NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.  
Boston. 12mo. pp. 334.

THE mental and moral influence of the most faultless novels and tales of the fashion now current is at least questionable. There is reason to apprehend, that no mind could feed much upon them, without finding its notions of life unsettled, and the balance of its moral judgment disturbed. And the fault lies, not in any depravity of taste or perversion of feeling in the writers, but in the peculiar *kind* of composition. Fictions of this class create, where there is a creation already. They usurp the realm of fact, and change its order into anarchy. They disturb and displace the fabric of things as they are, and build up their ideal world in the very same space, which the actual world occupies. But true poetry, (from which higher fiction differs only in form,) takes for the theatre of its creations space unoccupied by grosser shapes and material agencies. Its province lies beyond, beneath, and within the world of matter and of fact. It leaves things as they are; but breathes into them a vital glow, writes upon them the image of the unseen and spiritual, and robes them in a softer light, a richer charm, a purer beauty. This is the character of the Tales before us. For this we prize and admire them. They are poetry from the deepest fountains of inspiration. Their interest consists in the development, not of events, but of sentiment. Many of them have neither plot nor catastrophe, indeed, are not tales in the common sense of the word; but are simply flower-garlands of poetic feeling wreathed around some everyday scene or object.

We thank and love the man, who draws aside for us the veil between sense and spirit, who reveals to us the inward signifi-

cance, the hidden harmonies of common things, who bathes in poetic tints the prosaic elements of daily life. We welcome such a work, and deem it truly great, however humble or unostentatious the form in which it is wrought. We feel that Mr. Hawthorne has done this for us, and we thank him. We thank him also for having given us creations so full of moral purity and beauty.

We are charmed by the naïveté of these tales. Their style is perfectly transparent. The author shows himself in all of them; and we feel, after the perusal of this little volume, as if we had always been familiarly acquainted with him. The best pieces in the volume are those, which give us merely a transcript of the author's own musings, with barely a thread of incident to bind them together. The "Sunday at Home" could have been written only by one, who revelled in the hushed calm and holy light of the Sabbath, whose soul was attuned to its harmonies, but of so fastidious a taste and delicate a sensibility, as to be repelled and chilled by the dissonances of the multitude's worship. "Sights from a Steeple" is a graphic and beautiful sketch (*à la "Diable Boiteux,"*) of the scenes and adventures, discernible in a half hour's gaze from a church steeple,—a picture which, as every one knows, must needs borrow its shapes and colors much more from the author's own mind, than from the city of his residence. "A Rill from the Town-pump" is an outgush (in the form of a soliloquy by the pump) of those manifold and party-colored associations and feelings, which always cluster around an object, however humble, which has been familiar to the eye from infancy; and the object is in itself so bare, barren, unsuggestive, as to give us the clearer insight into the mind, which could weave its ungraceful trunk, and arm, and trough, into a charming little idyll, as clear and refreshing as its own cool stream. There is hardly anything in the volume, which pleases us more than "Little Annie's Ramble," which is a mere sketch, simple, natural, full of child-like feeling, of a child's stroll with her friend through the gay streets of the town, by the print-shops and the toy-shops, through all the little worlds of gorgeous sights, which arrest infancy's lingering steps on its earliest walks.

The chief fault, which we can find with these delicious phantasies, is, that some of them are too vague and dreamy, drawn with dim and shadowy outlines only. If we may be allowed to prophesy, we pronounce this volume, beautiful as

we deem it, as but a gathering of early windfalls,—the earnest of future rich, ripe, mellow harvests, we hope, for half a century to come. A mind so rich, a heart so pure and so enamored with purity, a love of nature so confiding and child-like, an imagination so teeming with gorgeous fancies, cannot blossom and shed its first-fruits, without awakening the fondest hopes and betraying the brightest promise.

There is hardly one of these Tales, grave or gay, which we would not gladly give our readers; and we hardly know where to make our choice. We should like to transfer "The Gentle Boy" to our pages; but it is too long, and would not bear the scissors. We will content ourselves with "David Swan,"—a leaf out of the every-day book of life, illustrating the safe and narrow path by which a kind Providence guides us between hidden precipices and chasms, by unseen pitfalls both of sorrow and of deceptive joy.

"We can be but partially acquainted even with the events which actually influence our course through life, and our final destiny. There are innumerable other events, if such they may be called, which come close upon us, yet pass away without actual results, or even betraying their near approach, by the reflection of any light or shadow across our minds. Could we know all the vicissitudes of our fortunes, life would be too full of hope and fear, exultation or disappointment, to afford us a single hour of true serenity. This idea may be illustrated by a page from the secret history of David Swan.

"We have nothing to do with David, until we find him, at the age of twenty, on the high road from his native place to the city of Boston, where his uncle, a small dealer in the grocery line, was to take him behind the counter. Be it enough to say, that he was a native of New Hampshire, born of respectable parents, and had received an ordinary school education, with a classic finish by a year at Gilmanton academy. After journeying on foot, from sunrise till nearly noon of a summer's day, his weariness and the increasing heat determined him to sit down in the first convenient shade, and await the coming up of the stage coach. As if planted on purpose for him, there soon appeared a little tuft of maples, with a delightful recess in the midst, and such a fresh bubbling spring, that it seemed never to have sparkled for any wayfarer but David Swan. Virgin or not, he kissed it with his thirsty lips, and then flung himself along the brink, pillowng his head upon some shirts and a pair of pantaloons, tied up in a striped cotton handkerchief. The sunbeams could not reach

him ; the dust did not yet rise from the road, after the heavy rain of yesterday ; and his grassy lair suited the young man better than a bed of down. The spring murmured drowsily beside him ; the branches waved dreamily across the blue sky overhead ; and a deep sleep, perchance hiding dreams within its depths, fell upon David Swan. But we are to relate events which he did not dream of.

" While he lay sound asleep in the shade, other people were wide awake, and passed to and fro, a-foot, on horseback, and in all sorts of vehicles, along the sunny road by his bedchamber. Some looked neither to the right hand nor the left, and knew not that he was there ; some merely glanced that way, without admitting the slumberer among their busy thoughts ; some laughed to see how soundly he slept ; and several, whose hearts were brimming full of scorn, ejected their venomous superfluity on David Swan. A middle-aged widow, when nobody else was near, thrust her head a little way into the recess, and vowed that the young fellow looked charming in his sleep. A temperance lecturer saw him, and wrought poor David into the texture of his evening's discourse, as an awful instance of dead drunkenness by the road-side. But, censure, praise, merriment, scorn, and indifference, were all one or rather all nothing to David Swan.

" He had slept only a few moments, when a brown carriage, drawn by a handsome pair of horses, bowled easily along, and was brought to a stand-still, nearly in front of David's resting place. A linch-pin had fallen out, and permitted one of the wheels to slide off. The damage was slight, and occasioned merely a momentary alarm to an elderly merchant and his wife, who were returning to Boston in the carriage. While the coachman and a servant were replacing the wheel, the lady and gentleman sheltered themselves beneath the maple trees, and there espied the bubbling fountain, and David Swan asleep beside it. Impressed with the awe which the humblest sleeper usually sheds around him, the merchant trod as lightly as the gout would allow ; and his spouse took good heed not to rustle her silk gown, lest David should start up, all of a sudden." — pp. 261 — 263.

This respectable couple had lost their only son, had been disappointed by the ill conduct of a young relative designed to fill his place, and seriously conferred together on the expediency of adopting this handsome and unsophisticated young stranger as their son and heir.

" ' Providence seems to have laid him here,' whispered she to her husband, ' and to have brought us hither to find him, after

our disappointment in our cousin's son. Methinks I can see a likeness to our departed Henry. Shall we waken him?

"To what purpose?" said the merchant, hesitating. "We know nothing of the youth's character."

"That open countenance!" replied his wife, in the same hushed voice, yet earnestly. "This innocent sleep!"

"While these whispers were passing, the sleeper's heart did not throb, nor his breath become agitated, nor his features betray the least token of interest. Yet fortune was bending over him, just ready to let fall a burthen of gold. \* \* \*

"Shall we not waken him?" repeated the lady, persuasively.

"The coach is ready, sir," said the servant behind.

The old couple started, reddened, and hurried away, mutually wondering, that they should ever have dreamed of doing anything so very ridiculous. The merchant threw himself back in the carriage, and occupied his mind with the plan of a magnificent asylum for unfortunate men of business. Meanwhile, David Swan enjoyed his nap.

"The carriage could not have gone above a mile or two, when a pretty young girl came along, with a tripping pace, which showed precisely how her little heart was dancing in her bosom." — pp. 264, 265.

This girl, too, accidentally turns aside into David's bedchamber, just in time to do battle with a mischievous bee that was settling on his eyelid.

"This good deed accomplished, with quickened breath, and a deeper blush, she stole a glance at the youthful stranger, for whom she had been battling with a dragon in the air.

"He is handsome!" thought she, and blushed redder yet.

"How could it be that no dream of bliss grew so strong within him, that, shattered by its very strength, it should part asunder, and allow him to perceive the girl among its phantoms? Why, at least, did no smile of welcome brighten upon his face? She was come, the maid whose soul, according to the old and beautiful idea, had been severed from his own, and whom, in all his vague but passionate desires, he yearned to meet. Her, only, could he love with a perfect love, — him, only, could she receive into the depths of her heart, — and now her image was faintly blushing in the fountain, by his side; should it pass away, its happy lustre would never gleam upon his life again.

"How sound he sleeps!" murmured the girl.

"She departed, but did not trip along the road so lightly as when she came.

"Now, this girl's father was a thriving country merchant in

the neighborhood, and happened, at that identical time, to be looking out for just such a young man as David Swan. Had David formed a way-side acquaintance with the daughter, he would have become the father's clerk, and all else in natural succession. So here, again, had good fortune—the best of fortunes—stolen so near, that her garments brushed against him ; and he knew nothing of the matter.

“The girl was hardly out of sight, when two men turned aside beneath the maple shade.” — pp. 264–267.

These men are a couple of villains, ripe for any crime, and, imagining that David must have a little hoard of money about him, they are going to rifle him, and to stab him if he stirs.

“But, at this moment, a dog, scenting along the ground, came in beneath the maple trees, and gazed alternately at each of these wicked men, and then at the quiet sleeper. He then lapped out of the fountain.

“‘Pshaw !’ said one villain. ‘We can do nothing now. The dog’s master must be close behind.’

“‘Let’s take a drink, and be off,’ said the other.

“The man, with the dagger, thrust back the weapon into his bosom, and drew forth a pocket pistol, but not of that kind which kills by a single discharge. It was a flask of liquor with a block-tin tumbler screwed upon the mouth. Each drank a comfortable dram, and left the spot, with so many jests, and such laughter at their unaccomplished wickedness, that they might be said to have gone on their way rejoicing. In a few hours, they had forgotten the whole affair, nor once imagined that the angel had written down the crime of murder against their souls, in letters as durable as eternity. As for David Swan, he still slept quietly, neither conscious of the shadow of death when it hung over him, nor of the glow of renewed life, when that shadow was withdrawn.

“He slept, but no longer so quietly as at first. An hour’s repose had snatched from his elastic frame the weariness with which many hours of toil had burthened it. Now, he stirred—now, moved his lips, without a sound—now, talked, in an inward tone, to the noonday spectres of his dream. But a noise of wheels came rattling louder and louder along the road, until it dashed through the dispersing mist of David’s slumber—and there was the stage coach. He started up, with all his ideas about him.

“‘Halloo, driver !—Take a passenger ?’ shouted he.

“‘Room on top !’ answered the driver.

“Up mounted David, and bowled away merrily towards Boston,

without so much as a parting glance at that fountain of dreamlike vicissitude. He knew not that a phantom of wealth had thrown a golden hue upon its waters — nor that one of love had sighed softly to their murmur — nor that one of death had threatened to crimson them with his blood — all in the brief hour since he lay down to sleep. Sleeping or waking, we hear not the airy footsteps of the strange things that almost happen. Does it not argue a superintending Providence, that, while viewless and unexpected events thrust themselves continually athwart our path, there should still be regularity enough, in mortal life, to render foresight even partially available? ” — pp. 268 — 270.

Our author's peculiar talent seems to be that disclosed in the Tale just quoted, — that, not of weaving a material plot, but of gathering a group of spirit phantoms around some scene or moment in itself utterly uneventful.

These Tales abound with beautiful imagery, sparkling metaphors, novel and brilliant comparisons. They are everywhere full of those bright gems of thought, which no reader can ever forget. They contain many of those bold master-strokes of rhetoric, which dispatch whole pages of description in a single word. Thus, for instance, an adopted child is spoken of as “*a domesticated sunbeam*” in the family, which had adopted him. How full of meaning is that simple phrase! How much does it imply, and conjure up of beauty, sweetness, gentleness, and love! How comprehensive, yet how definite! Who, after reading it, can help recurring to it, whenever he sees the sunny, happy little face of a father's pride or a mother's joy? This is but one of many of our author's similes, which we find branded into our own memory, as instinct with life and beauty.

We have spoken of the high moral tone of these pages. It is for this, for their reverence for things sacred, for their many touching lessons concerning faith, Providence, conscience, and duty, for the beautiful morals so often spontaneously conveyed, not with purpose prepense, but from the fulness of the author's own heart, that we are led to notice them in this journal. We close our notice by extracting two or three passages, which will convey some idea of the holy breathings that pervade the book. Our first extract is from the “Sunday at Home.”

“ On the Sabbath, I watch the earliest sunshine, and fancy that a holier brightness marks the day, when there shall be no

buzz of voices on the Exchange, nor traffic in the shops, nor crowd, nor business, anywhere but at church. Many have fancied so. For my own part, whether I see it scattered down among tangled woods, or beaming broad across the fields, or hemmed in between brick buildings, or tracing out the figure of the casement on my chamber floor, still I recognise the Sabbath sunshine. And ever let me recognise it ! Some illusions, and this among them, are the shadows of great truths. Doubts may flit around me or seem to close their evil wings, and settle down ; but, so long as I imagine that the earth is hallowed, and the light of heaven retains its sanctity on the Sabbath — while that blessed sunshine lives within me — never can my soul have lost the instinct of its faith. If it have gone astray, it will return again." — p. 27.

We must not forget the beautiful close of "Little Annie's Ramble." Annie's mother, alarmed by her absence, has commissioned the town-crier to look her up.

"Stop, stop, town-crier ! the lost is found. Oh, my pretty Annie, we forgot to tell your mother of our ramble, and she is in despair, and has sent the town-crier to bellow up and down the streets, affrighting old and young for the loss of a little girl who has not once let go my hand ! Well, let us hasten homeward ; and as we go, forget not to thank heaven, my Annie, that after wandering a little way into the world, you may return at the first summons, with an untainted and unwearied heart, and be a happy child again. But I have gone too far astray for the town-crier to call me back.

"Sweet has been the charm of childhood on my spirit, throughout my ramble with little Annie ! Say not that it has been a waste of precious moments, an idle matter, a babble of childish talk, and a reverie of childish imaginations, about topics unworthy of a grown man's notice. Has it been merely this ? Not so ; not so. They are not truly wise who would affirm it. As the pure breath of children revives the life of aged men, so is our moral nature revived by their free and simple thoughts, their native feeling, their airy mirth for little cause or none, their grief soon roused and soon allayed. Their influence on us is at least reciprocal with ours on them. When our infancy is almost forgotten, and our boyhood long departed, though it seems but as yesterday ; when life settles darkly down upon us, and we doubt whether to call ourselves young any more ; then it is good to steal away from the society of bearded men, and even of gentler woman, and spend an hour or two with children. After drinking from those fountains of still fresh existence, we

shall return into the crowd, as I do now, to struggle onward and do our part in life, perhaps as fervently as ever, but, for a time, with a kinder and purer heart, and a spirit more lightly wise. All this by thy sweet magic, dear little Annie ! ” — pp. 181, 182.

Who does not recognise in this extract, and in the whole playful little piece which it closes, a beautiful, though unintended commentary on the divine act of Him, who, to allay the heated passions and jealousies of wrathful and selfish men, “ called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them ” ?

A. P. P.

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ART. IV.—THE CLAIMS OF EPISCOPACY EXAMINED ; BEING  
THE DUDLEIAN LECTURE DELIVERED IN THE CHAPEL OF  
HARVARD UNIVERSITY, MAY 9TH, 1838. BY THE REV.  
GEORGE R. NOYES.

It is, I presume, known to this audience, that the subject of the present lecture is not of the speaker’s choice. If it were so, no sufficient apology could be made for bringing forward a topic so destitute of interest at the present time, as that of the validity of congregational ordination. Who doubts or denies the validity of congregational ordination, is the question, which is at once suggested by the annunciation of the subject.

The present lecture was founded by an accomplished chief justice of Massachusetts, at a time when it was a colony of Great Britain ; and when the belief was entertained that undue influence from abroad was, or was to be, exerted to introduce the English hierarchy into the land of the Puritans. And though this danger has ceased, and though the Episcopal controversy has grown obsolete in this part of the country, the lecture is continued from respect to the memory and will of the founder, and from regard to whatever intrinsic importance the subject may still possess.

At any rate a necessity is laid upon the speaker to devote the passing hour to the discussion of this subject, and he must address himself to his task, trusting that the circumstances, which have been mentioned, will be a sufficient apology to those, from whom he may differ in opinion, for reviving an ob-

solete controversy, and to all his hearers for inviting their attention to an argument upon so dry a topic.

According to the will of the founder of this lecture, it is my duty "to maintain, explain, and prove the validity of the ordination of ministers, or pastors of the churches, and of their administration of the sacraments, or ordinances of religion, as the same hath been practised in New England from the beginning of it. Not," says he, "that I would invalidate episcopal ordination, as it is commonly called and practised in the church of England."

Though I am not called upon to deny the validity of any species of ordination, yet it so happens, that the only way of completely establishing the validity of congregational ordination is by disproving the exclusive claim of Papal and Protestant Episcopacy. The term validity has a different force from sufficiency or utility. It has reference to a claim of divine right, and of exclusive authority to administer the ordinances of religion in a manner acceptable to God and profitable to the recipient. If I could succeed in proving ever so clearly, that ordination, or induction into office, by the common members of a Christian church, or by Christian ministers of equal rank, is agreeable to reason, and well adapted to answer the great end for which Christ came into the world, namely, to establish the empire of truth and duty in the souls of men, still I should be met with the assertion that Episcopacy is a matter of express divine Revelation; that it has been expressly commanded by the Maker of heaven and earth that all Christian ministers should be ordained by one of superior rank, called a bishop, and not by the united agency of any number of Christian men, or Christian ministers of equal rank; and that thus the Episcopal ministry is obligatory to the exclusion of all other ministries. This claim, though abandoned by many of the great lights of the English church,\* is now set up by the Episcopal church in this country, as appears from a recent treatise of an American bishop, published by the authority of the Protestant Episcopal press.†

\* See various documents in Neal's History of the Puritans, Vol. I. Index, *Bishops*. Especially, pp. 495 - 498, Edition 1732, and Stillingfleet's Irenicum, p. 393, &c.

† *Episcopacy tested by Scripture*. By the Right Reverend Henry U. Onderdonk, D. D., Assistant Bishop &c. in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. New York: Published by the Protestant Episcopal Tract Society.

Now I do not believe that the Governor of the world has established any particular mode of ordination, or revealed his will that any particular order of men should perform it. The laws of truth and order, duty and piety, are all which in my view have been established by Jesus Christ. I believe that any mode of publicly appointing a Christian minister is valid ; that by being ordained a man acquires no new character, no new rights or powers, and is placed in no new relations, except those created by his peculiar duties ; and consequently that what essentially constitutes a Christian minister is intellectual and moral fitness for the performance of his duties, and the consent or choice of those for whom he performs them. I believe, therefore, that every mode of ordination, the Episcopal among the rest, is valid, which secures the end of it, the establishment of able and pious Christian teachers, and thus the establishment of Christian dispositions and principles in the human soul. Congregational ordination I prefer, because I think it has been found by the experience of the New England churches to answer this end as well as any other, and is free from some objections, to which Episcopacy is subject, and is not inconsistent with the revealed will of God.

This last negative point is the principal thing to be established by a Congregationalist. Jesus Christ and his apostles are the sources from which we are to obtain light upon it. Let us first endeavor to ascertain the mind of the author and finisher of our faith respecting it. It is admitted by all that he has given no express command upon the subject of ordination. Still it may be possible to infer what was his mind in relation to it. He must have relied upon some means for the establishment and propagation of his religion in the world. Let us then view this particular question of ordination in the light of the general subject, of which it is a part. By getting an insight into the mind of Jesus respecting the means upon which he relied to secure the triumph of his religion in the world, we may infer what was his mind upon this particular question of ordination, and what he would have said upon the subject, had he expressed his mind in words.

I. In the first place, Jesus relied upon his personal ministry ; upon his miracles, the special proofs of his divine authority ; upon his teachings ; upon his life ; upon his cross. He relied upon the influence of all these upon the human understanding, and the human heart. He had confidence in the capacity of the human understanding to appreciate evidence and to judge

of the truth. He had confidence in the human conscience, that it would perceive and value the beauty of moral excellence in precept and in conduct. He had confidence in the human heart, that it would feel the power of disinterested love. He relied upon no outward trappings, no robes of office, no official sanctity, no connexion with the temple, no means of any kind, adapted to secure a blind veneration. "Why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right,"\* is his language. He claimed, indeed, to be a king; but a king, not of armies, of treasures, of palaces, of outward authority and pomp, but a king of truth. "Art thou a king then?" is the question of Pilate to him, who stood arraigned as a Jewish criminal before him. "Yes, I am a king," is the reply; "for this end was I born, and for this end came I into the world, that I might bear witness for the truth. Every man, who is for the truth, is my subject."†

And to whom did Jesus chiefly address himself? To the priests, to the occupiers of the chief seats, to Gamaliel and his scholars? No! He addressed himself to the common mind. He regarded his truth, not as a luxury for philosophers, or a special deposit for the theologians and priests, but as the means of salvation to the poor. He entrusted not the keys of knowledge to any particular class of men. He aimed to gain a lodgment for the truth in the minds of the common people. He proclaimed it in the streets and in the fields, at the social circle, amid publicans and sinners, at the wedding supper, at the grave of his friend, by the wells of water, and in the solitude of the mountains. Wherever he could find human minds and hearts into which he might cast the good seed of the word, there he cast it, entertaining a calm confidence that the leaven of his truth would finally pervade the whole lump of human society; that the grain of mustard seed would not perish, but grow into a great tree, the leaves of which should be for the healing of the nations.

Thus you see that, for the establishment and propagation of his religion in the world, Jesus relied upon qualifications received from God. He aimed not to secure blind veneration, but to convince by evidence, and to win by disinterested love, manifested by his life, and especially by his cross. The spirit of Christ, then, as manifested by his personal ministry, is wholly opposed to the spirit, which attaches importance to any particu-

\* Luke xii. 57.

† John xviii. 37.

lar mode of ordination, or relies upon inherent official sanctity or authority, transmitted from age to age through the efficacy of a ceremony, performed by a particular class or caste of men. When he abolished sacrifices and ceremonies, and declared that the true worshippers should have access to God, not only at Jerusalem and in the temple, but in every spot, where the spirit of sincerity and truth was found, he meant to abolish the order of priests, as a separate caste, standing between God and the people, and clothed with an official inherent sanctity and authority. His followers were to be all clergy and all laity, all priests and all people. The truth of Christ, the care of his religion, as a permanent thing, was entrusted by him to Christians at large, who were to call no man master, but Christ.

II. In addition to his personal ministry, another means, relied upon by Christ for the permanent establishment and propagation of his religion in the world, was the constitution of a society or church, composed of those, who not only received his religion, but professed it, and cherished fellowship with each other, and with him as their common head, by the participation of the Lord's supper. He seems to have deemed it a matter of importance that his disciples should make a public profession of faith in his religion. In his conversation with Nicodemus he says in his most solemn manner, "Except a man be born of water and of the spirit he cannot see the kingdom of God." The general meaning of this declaration is obvious. It is as if he had said to Nicodemus, it is not sufficient to come and listen to me in the darkness of night; it is not sufficient to be born of the spirit, or to receive my religion into the soul, and keep it a secret from the world. My true disciples, the genuine subjects of the kingdom of God and the possessors of its blessings, must own themselves to be my disciples by a public profession of faith in my religion. They will be willing to be born of water as well as of the spirit. Such a public avowal of conviction of Christian truth was eminently useful, and perhaps essential to the first establishment of Christianity in the world. In an age when so many motives existed, urging to the concealment of one's opinions, it was particularly necessary not only to receive Christian truth into the inner man, but publicly to profess it to the world. Nor do I perceive in the nature of the case any reason for supposing that a public religious profession should be regarded as a temporary appointment of the founder of our religion. If it were necessary in its infancy, it

is useful now. It serves to strengthen attachment to the truth in the mind of the professor, and at the same time to make known to others what one has found to be true and precious. It is well that the world should be informed in the most authentic way what have been the convictions of the most exalted minds. It is well that the world should know that such men as Parsons and Marshall have been convinced of the divine authority of Jesus Christ, and thus that his religion possesses high claims to their immediate and attentive investigation. This purpose is gained in the most effectual way by a public religious profession. To be born a member of a parish, to own a pew in a church, to be an occasional or constant attendant upon Christian worship, is not, at the present day, a sufficient testimony that one is a believer in the divine authority of Jesus Christ. It was a wise measure for the establishment and security of his religion, that Jesus should constitute a society or church, which should consist of those, who were willing to make a public profession of faith in his religion. However, therefore, the true use of a church may have been lost sight of, however numerous may be the errors in regard to the qualifications of membership, however great the abuses to which the church may have been prostituted, and however inefficient it may be in any particular period of the world, it is still true, that for the extension and security of his religion a church was established by Christ, to be distinguished from the rest of the world not only by the practice, but by the profession of his religion ; that it is not a mere human institution resting on the basis of utility or expediency ; and that it is not to be confounded with any other body or congregation of men, not professing faith in Christ, however intimately and harmoniously it may unite with it in the support of piety, religion, and morality. It has been said that in primitive times there was no distinction between the church and congregation. But at such a time was not every member of the congregation a Christian by profession ? Was any man, in primitive times, regarded as a member of the Christian church, who had not made a public profession of faith in the Christian religion ? Was any one regarded as a member of the Christian church, who did not in some public way recognise the divine authority of Jesus Christ ?

As the church owes its establishment to Christ, so in regard to its terms of membership it is subject to none but him. He has set before all men an open door, and no man can shut it.

Profession of faith in the divine authority of Christ is the only just requirement for admission, scandalous and disorderly conduct the only just ground for exclusion or expulsion.

III. In addition to the personal ministry of Christ, and the establishment of a Christian society or church, the third means adopted by Christ for the diffusion of his religion was the appointment of special teachers, whose express business it should be to be witnesses of the facts on which the divine authority of his religion rests, and to make them and the religion resting upon them known to the world. And now for its bearing upon the subject of this lecture observe the spirit, the mind of Christ in the appointment of the twelve upon whom he specially relied for this purpose. See if it be not a spirit, opposed to the idea of official sanctity and power, conferred by a ceremony on a particular order of men. See if it be not a spirit opposed to distinction of ranks in the ministers of his religion. He chose them from the common people, not from the lowest class, as has sometimes been asserted, but from those, who had something to leave and to lose, when they became his apostles. But he chose them from laboring men; not from the sacred tribe of Levi, not from the holy order of priests, but from the common people, from those who could sympathize with the people, and find access to the minds of the people. He sent them not to "Aaron's old wardrobe" to array themselves in priestly attire, to mark a holy order to which they were introduced, and to separate them from the people. He taught them to address themselves, not to the eyes, but to the minds and hearts of men. He taught them to rely upon qualifications for usefulness. The apostles of Jesus were to be with him, to see what he did, to hear what he said, and to mark the spirit with which he spoke and acted. He labored to qualify them to be teachers of the people, not priests to stand between God and the people.

Observe, too, how he discouraged everything like distinction of rank. One is your master, even Christ, says he, and all ye are brethren.\* According to his mind, not only all ministers, but all Christians are of equal rank. The Christian minister is not of a higher rank or holier order than the people, more than the lecturer of a lyceum is of a different order from those, whom he addresses. He that will be greatest among you, says he, let him be your servant. He is the greatest Christian minister, who performs the most service in bringing his fel-

\* Matthew xx. 26 - 28.

low men to the love and obedience of the truth. He is the hierophant of the Christian church, who exerts the best, the widest, the most enduring influence in the cause of truth and righteousness; who puts forth the mightiest power in redeeming men from the bondage of ignorance and sin, and making them the enlightened and willing subjects of the Prince of Peace.

Jesus Christ, then, would have his servants place no great value upon any ordination, but the ordination of Almighty God, manifested in the conscious possession of intellectual and spiritual qualifications for being actual Christian teachers, and in the consent of as many as are willing to hear them, and to receive from them the Christian rites.

And is not the spirit of Christ on this subject coincident with the voice of providence, with the voice of the present times? Are there not manifest indications in our land, that the ministers of Christ can retain their influence and hold upon society, only by possessing a far greater amount of useful attainments than has been required of them in past times? We live in a time when a vast amount of knowledge has been circulated among the people, and when they are eager to possess more. We need in the towns of this commonwealth, and especially in our inland towns, ministers, who can command respect by being able, in some measure, to satisfy the thirst of the people for information on subjects not immediately connected with technical theology. We need men of enlarged and liberal minds, familiar with natural, moral, and political science; capable of taking an active part in societies for mutual improvement; able to discuss in a satisfactory manner subjects which engage the attention of the public mind; men not only understanding our religion, able to explain its records, familiar with its evidences, conversant with ecclesiastical history, but capable of illustrating our religion by numerous facts and analogies drawn from the world of matter and of mind, and capable of applying their knowledge to numberless topics upon which the Christian religion has a bearing. We need Christian ministers, who shall always be in advance of the people, to whatever degree of progress they may attain. It needs no prophetic foresight to predict, that the people of New England for a century to come will not support a class of men to ring changes upon words, or to trick out trivial thoughts in a fantastic dress of language, or to pour forth

sentimental effusions resting on no basis of fact or argument ; or to substitute pantheistical mysticism in place of an intelligent faith in the God of their fathers, or the bold pretensions of unaided reason in place of the well-attested claims of supernatural revelation.

But to return to the subject from which I have for a moment wandered, I would observe, that I do not maintain that the mind of Christ is opposed to appropriate religious services upon the commencement of any important undertaking ; or that it is opposed to prayer or the imposition of hands, when one enters upon the duties of the Christian ministry. Jesus laid his own hands upon little children when he blessed them, and he spent the night in prayer to God, before he appointed his twelve apostles. What I do maintain is, that Christ was opposed to the idea that prayer or the imposition of hands by any man, or any class of men, conferred any official sanctity or authority. He would have his ministers feel that they are called of God, by the conscious possession of qualifications for the instruction and improvement of their fellow men ; that they should partake of the character of the Jewish prophets, possessing the spirit of him who exclaimed,

His word is in my heart like a burning fire, shut up in my bones,  
And I am weary with forbearing,  
And I cannot refrain —\*

rather than of the Jewish priests, an order borrowed, in accommodation to Jewish weakness, from Egyptian heathenism, who took much upon themselves because they were the sons of Levi, and too often imitated the first of the order, who, instead of keeping the people from idolatry, actually made for them the golden calf.

From the cursory view we have taken of the means which Christ adopted to establish his religion in the world, we derive an argument against the idea of a peculiar official sanctity, or inherent official authority, to be conferred by one person upon another ; against the spirit which attaches importance to the mode in which a Christian teacher is introduced into his office ; against the spirit which underrates the capacity of the people for self-government. We have made it probable to those, who judge, not from the letter which killeth, but from the spirit

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\* Jer. xx. 9.

which giveth life, that as the founder of our religion not only established no hierarchy, appointed no form of ordination, and gave no directions as to the persons who should perform it, so he never meant that his Apostles should make regulations upon the subject, binding all succeeding ages, as by the authority of God. The fair conclusion is, that he meant to leave the matter to the reason and judgment of those who should believe on his name, in the confidence that those would arise who should feel called of God to be Christian teachers by the conscious possession of qualifications for the office, and that those, who were wise enough to receive his religion, would be wise enough to adopt the necessary means to guard themselves from imposition in regard to the qualifications of professed religious teachers, and wise enough to see that they were inducted into office by appropriate religious services. When I consider the mind of Christ manifested in the means adopted by him for the advancement of his religion, the spirit which attaches a peculiar sanctity to any class or caste of men, or which attaches importance to the mode or the persons by which they are inducted into office, appears to me as inconsistent with it, as would be the blood of victims, the flames of altars, and the smoke of incense in our houses of worship.

I am aware that it may be thought by some, that I have scarcely touched upon my subject, and that my remarks have been directed against a spirit which exists in other denominations of Christians besides the Episcopalian. And this last remark is true. I am aware that Episcopilians do not appeal to the instructions or history of the founder of our religion for proof of their peculiar opinions, but to the history of the Apostles, and especially to the Epistles of Paul. It must, however, appear singular, that, if the Episcopalian views are derived from divine revelation, there should be not a word in favor of them, and so much in opposition to them, in the life and instructions of the author and finisher of our faith.

But I do not stop here. I regard the history of the Apostles, and their letters to their companions and friends, and to the early Christian churches, as valuable sources of information in regard to Christian truth and Christian institutions.

Respecting the information to be derived from the Apostles in relation to this subject, it appears to me that two propositions may be established; first, that whatever directions the Apostles

gave, and whatever measures they adopted for the regulation of the concerns of the infant church in their day, were the dictates not of divine revelation, but of necessity, or of expediency. In relation to them the Apostles acted in no other character than that of reasonable and reasoning men, and never intended to give their acts the force of divine authority, binding upon the church in all ages; and, secondly, that all the conclusions, which can be drawn from the language or practice of the Apostles, whatever be the authority which is conceded to them, are wholly unfavorable to the claims of Episcopacy.

In regard to the first proposition, it may be observed, that as religious teachers in general they are not to be considered\* as standing in the place of Jesus Christ. Every casual word and action, which is recorded of them, is not to be regarded as if it proceeded from the author and finisher of our faith. The Apostles make a vast difference between themselves and their Lord and Master. They sometimes expressly tell us that they speak as men, and not with divine authority. They assembled for conference and deliberation.† They compared together their sentiments. They differed from each other in opinion in regard to matters of far higher importance than the subject of ordination. Sometimes Paul rebuked Peter;‡ and between Paul and Barnabas there was a sharp contention.§ Infallibility in their words and conduct the Apostles never claimed, and it ought not to be claimed for them. Such a claim, I apprehend, will present a serious, if not an insuperable difficulty to any one, who shall undertake to defend the divine authority of the Christian revelation. It is enough that we believe Christ to be an infallible teacher, and the Apostles qualified, by divine aid and by their nearness to their Master, to be trust-worthy expositors of the essential doctrines and duties of Christianity. In regard to regulations for the maintenance of order in the churches, a claim of divine authority is liable to the objection, which may be urged against unnecessary miracles, and may be expressed in the well known advice of Horace to a writer of fiction :

Nec deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus  
Inciderit.

\* It may be proper to mention, that the following remarks, and the whole argument from the *Acts* and the *Epistles*, were omitted in the delivery of the Lecture, on account of its length.

† *Acts xv. 6, &c.*      ‡ *Gal. ii. 11-14.*      § *Acts xv. 39.*

The practice of the Apostles is certainly not in all respects to be imitated, unless any one supposes that, because there was a sharp contention between Paul and Barnabas, there must be a sharp contention between all Christian ministers to the end of time.

So far as the directions and practice of the Apostles relate to church discipline and polity, we can fortify our conclusions by high Episcopalian authority. "What was used in the Apostles' times," says the learned and judicious Hooker, "the Scripture fully declareth not; so that making their times the rule and canon of church polity, ye make a rule, which being not possible to be fully known, is as impossible to be kept."\* And again, "'The rule of faith,' saith Tertullian, 'is but one, and that alone immovable, and impossible to be framed or cast anew.' The law of outward order and polity not so. There is no reason in the world, wherefore we should esteem it as necessary always to do, as always to believe, the same things; seeing every man knoweth that the matter of faith is constant; the matter contrariwise of action, daily changeable; especially the matter of action belonging unto church polity. Neither can I find that men of soundest judgment have any otherwise taught than that articles of belief, and things which all men must of necessity do to the end they may be saved, are either expressly set down in Scripture, or else plainly thereby to be gathered. But touching things which belong to discipline and outward polity the church hath authority to make canons, laws, and decrees, even as we read that in the Apostles' times it did. Which kind of laws (forasmuch as they are not in themselves necessary to salvation) may after they are made be also changed as the difference of times or places shall require."†

In the appointment of deacons we are expressly told why the Apostles were induced to do it. They say it was not because they had any direction from Christ, or revelation from God, in relation to the office, but because it was a measure dictated by convenience and propriety. "It is not reason," say they, "that we should leave the word of God, and serve tables; wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men,"‡ &c.

From all these considerations it follows, that though we may

\* Pref. to Eccles. Polity, § 4.

+ Eccles. Pol. Book iii. § 10.

† Acts vi. 2, 3.

rely upon the Apostles as giving us the essential doctrines and duties of Christianity, we have no reason to believe that they intended to give their directions or practice, in regard to the order or instruction of the church, the force of divine authority. The measures which they adopted may have been the best in the circumstances of the church in the days of the Apostles. They may, or may not, be the best, in different circumstances of the Christian church.

These remarks I have made, however, simply because they appear to me to be just and true, and because I am unwilling to assume as a basis of argument what appears to me to be unsound ; and not because I suppose that the language or example of St. Paul affords the shadow of an argument in favor of Episcopal ordination and government ; in favor of a perpetual superior class of Christian ministers, whose exclusive right it is to ordain other ministers, and to govern them when ordained. I am willing to discuss the subject on any basis, which has been assumed, in regard to the authority of the language and practice of the Apostles.

The term bishop, which occurs several times in the New Testament, and which by many of the unlearned is supposed to favor modern episcopacy, is in reality opposed to it. This term, or the original for it, *ἐπίσκοπος*, occurs once in the Acts of the Apostles, and four times in the Epistles of Paul, and always in such a connexion as to show that it denotes a common presiding officer of a single church or society, and not a ruler of other officers of the church, or of a number of churches. The term is one of the few instances, in which the English language corresponds to the expressiveness of the Greek, and can give it a complete translation ; *ἐπί-σκοπος*, over-seer. The term was given to a minister of the Christian religion to denote his duty of oversight, superintendence. Now whether the duty of oversight or superintendence was to be exercised over a single society of Christians, or over a number of ordained ministers, or of separate churches, we can only learn from the connexion, in which the term bishop, or overseer, occurs. We cannot infer it from the force of the term. Let us then examine the connexion of the passages in which the term occurs, and learn whether the bishop of the New Testament be an overseer of other Christian ministers, or of a number of churches, or only an overseer of a single Christian church.

The first passage, in which the term occurs, is in the Acts

of the Apostles, Ch. xx. 28, where St. Paul, addressing the elders or presbyters, that is, the common presiding officers of the church of Ephesus, says to them, "Take heed to yourselves, and to all the flock over which the holy ghost hath made you bishops, ἐπισκόπους, to feed the church of the Lord." Here you see a single church has several bishops, and that the bishops of the New Testament were overseers, not of other ministers of the church, but of the flock, and that they are exhorted to feed, not the inferior clergy, but the church of the Lord.

You will also observe that the Apostle addresses those, whom he calls the elders or presbyters of the church of Ephesus. These elders he exhorts to take heed to the flock over which the holy ghost had made them bishops; from which it appears that the terms *elders* and *bishops* denote persons holding the same office, the former being a term of respect borrowed from Judaism, and the latter relating to their duty of overseeing, or taking the charge of a Christian church.

So in the Epistle of Paul to Titus, Ch. i. 5, 7, he says that he left him at Crete, that he might ordain elders in every city, if any be blameless, &c., for a bishop must be blameless. Here you see that the terms *elder* and *bishop* are interchanged, as entirely synonymous. Blameless elders must be appointed, because a bishop should be blameless. A similar mode of reasoning applied to the other cases,\* in which the terms occur, will prove that bishops and elders were synonymous terms, applied to the same class of persons, who were overseers of a single Christian church, and not of a number of Christian ministers of inferior rank, or of a number of separate churches. I need not particularly examine the other passages, as these views have been fully admitted by some of the most distinguished divines of the Episcopal church, one of whom is Bishop Onderdonk of Pennsylvania.†

One other fact seems to be apparent from the language of the Apostle Paul, viz., that he regarded bishops, in the sense above

\* 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2, 5; 1 Pet. ii. 25, v. 1-4.

† "The name *bishop*, which now designates the highest grade of the ministry, is not appropriated to this office in Scripture. That name is there given to the middle order, or presbyters; and all that we read in the New Testament concerning 'bishops,' including, of course, the words 'overseers' and 'oversight,' which have the same derivation, is to be regarded as pertaining to that middle grade." — *Episcopacy tested by Scripture*, p. 12.

explained, that is, overseers of single churches, and deacons, as the only regular and permanent officers of the church. He addresses his Epistle to the Philippians, "to all the saints that are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons." See also 1 Tim. iii. 1, 2, 8, &c.

But it has been maintained, that, although there is no mention in the Scriptures of an order of Christian ministers of higher rank than the rest, and having authority to govern the rest *under the name of bishops*, there is mention of an order called apostles, who had, among other powers, the exclusive right of ordination; and that there is no reason for supposing that this class of Christian ministers was temporary, but that, on the contrary, there is reason to believe that the authority of the Apostles, in respect to the ordination of Christian ministers, and to the discipline and government of these ministers and the churches under their care, was to be continued in a superior order of ministers, afterwards called bishops.\*

Now that the Apostles did exercise an authority in the church, which was not exercised by presbyters, or scripture bishops, and which could be exercised by others only in the character of agents, delegates, or assistants of the Apostles, is fully conceded. They or their agents may not only have *ordained*, in the technical sense, but occasionally *appointed* ministers for the early churches. But it cannot be proved that even the Apostles uniformly selected or ordained the ministers of the church. The election of deacons was made by the assembled brethren.† Delegates were also chosen by the churches to accompany an apostle.‡ When an apostle was to be appointed in the place of Judas, two were selected by all the assembled brethren, of whom one was to be appointed by lot.§ From these examples we may infer that the people were encouraged to elect their presbyters. When the Apostle Paul exhorts Timothy to appoint elders in every church, he may only mean to instruct him to see that elders are appointed, just as, when he exhorts him to assist or support widows, &c., Ch. v. 3, he means only that Timothy should take care that it was done by the churches.

That ordination, or consecration, was not performed by the Apostles exclusively, is plain from the exhortation of the Apos-

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\* See Onderdonk's Episcopacy tested by Scripture, pp. 15, 16.

† Acts vi. 2.

‡ Acts xv. 22.

§ Acts 1. 21-26.

tle to Timothy, "Neglect not the gift, that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery ;" \* of a company of presbyters. Timothy then was ordained by presbyters. It is true that, in 2 Tim. i. 6, we read, " Neglect not the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands." If this verse relate to the same transaction, as that recorded in the passage last quoted, according to which Timothy is said to have received his gift by the putting on of the hands of the presbytery, it may be inferred from both passages in connexion, that in respect to this ordination, the Apostle regarded himself simply as a presbyter, one of the presbyters, which ordained Timothy. So the Apostle Peter calls himself a presbyter.† The verse in question may, however, only relate to some spiritual gift, bestowed upon Timothy upon some occasion through prayer and the imposition of the hands of the Apostle.

We have no disposition, however, to deny that the Apostles and their agents or delegates exercised a peculiar authority in the early churches, and particularly we concede that in forming a new church they might appoint and ordain its officers. The Apostles are allowed to exercise an authority over all the churches at the present day by their writings. But if the fact of the great and peculiar authority of the Apostles proves anything in favor of the claims of modern bishops, it proves that they are equal to the Apostles in all respects. And why they do not claim the name, as well as the authority of Apostles, it is not easy to perceive. If, as successors of the Apostles, they have the exclusive right to ordain, to depose, to govern inferior Christian ministers, and to administer discipline in the churches, for the same reason they have the right to appoint all the ministers of the church, and even to make new regulations, and establish a new polity at the present day. If modern bishops have succeeded to the authority of the Apostles, they have as good a right to create an order of archbishops to oversee the bishops, as the Apostles had to create an order of bishops to oversee the presbyters, or inferior ministers of the church ; and finally they might create a pope to oversee the archbishops, and as the force of authority can no farther go, they must either acknowledge an infallible head in a frail child of dust, or deliver back the authority to the people, where Christ left it.

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\* 1 Tim. iv. 14.

† 1 Pet. v. 1.

This argument for the claims of modern bishops, drawn from their pretended succession to the authority of the Apostles, is suicidal. It proves too much. If they, indeed, inherit the office of apostles, let them assume the name of apostles, and make good their claim to it, in the same way in which Paul and Peter established their commission.

The truth is, that the apostolical office was extraordinary in several respects. It was extraordinary in the circumstances, in which, and the purposes for which, the apostles were appointed; in the gifts, with which they were endowed; and in the relations, in which they stood to the first churches, as their founders. From all these circumstances united they derived an authority, which could not be transmitted, unless by express miraculous interposition, which is not pretended.

The Apostles were missionaries to all the nations. They were appointed to be witnesses of all which they heard and saw of Jesus; of his life, his miracles, his words, his death, and especially his resurrection from the dead. They were to be witnesses of these things, not to a single church only, but to all the nations. This duty of being literal witnesses for Christ was, perhaps, the most important peculiarity of the apostolic office. When the place of one of the twelve was vacated by the treachery of Judas, the appointment of a successor to him is related as follows. "Wherefore of those men, which have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John unto that same day when he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection."\* From this verse we learn that the chief qualification for the office of an apostle, or a successor of an apostle, was to have been with Jesus Christ before his death, and to have been with him after his resurrection. St Paul gives it as one reason why he should be deemed an apostle, that he had seen Jesus Christ, his Lord.† It is evident that this peculiarity of the apostolic office was intransmissible, except by a miraculous manifestation of Jesus Christ. It appears, too, that the Apostles had the power of working miracles. They were also founders of churches, and, as such, would have a peculiar personal influence and authority over the churches founded by them. I apprehend that a modern missionary, writing to a church, of which

\* Acts i. 21, 22.

† 1 Cor. ix. 1.

he had been the founder, or to one of his converts, whom he had appointed as a teacher, would not be regarded as assuming authority, if he were to address them, as Paul addressed the Corinthians, or as he addressed his pupils and friends, Timothy and Titus. But such a personal influence is evidently intransmissible. And yet to have been the founders of churches was the smallest part of the claims of the Apostles to influence and authority.

From all these circumstances the Apostles would possess an influence and authority, which it was right that they should exercise in the exigencies of the infant churches. But they have nowhere told us, that they have delegated their authority, as Apostles, to be possessed and exercised after their death by an order of Christian ministers of higher rank than the rest. The office of apostle was extraordinary in its nature, and required by extraordinary circumstances. From its nature it could not be transmitted, and from a change of circumstances it is not required. The writings of the New Testament very well supply its place.

It is, however, alleged by Episcopal writers, that the Apostle Paul has clearly indicated the existence of the order of diocesan bishops, whose peculiar and exclusive privilege it was to ordain, in his Epistles to Timothy and Titus. Both of these men, it seems, were companions and assistants of the Apostle in his labors for the extension of the religion of Christ. Both of them had been converted to Christianity, or at least instructed in it, by the Apostle. He calls both of them his own sons, that is, his pupils in the faith.\* It appears plainly from other sources besides these Epistles, that he placed great reliance upon these, his pupils, as his aids, agents, and companions in the work of propagating the Christian religion. They were his partners and fellow helpers.†

And from the Epistles themselves it appears plainly, that whatever Paul wrote to Timothy and Titus, one of whom he had left at Ephesus and the other at Crete, he wrote to them as his assistants or agents, discharging a temporary duty, which he had left unfinished in those cities. If Timothy and Titus had been in reality permanent diocesan bishops of Ephesus and Crete, as has been alleged, why had not their duties been point-

\* 1 Tim. i. 2; Titus i. 4.

† 2 Cor. viii. 23.

ed out to them, when they were inaugurated to their office? The letters of the Apostle to them are plainly letters of instruction to temporary agents, clothing them for a time with apostolic authority, and designed also to be their credentials to the churches of Ephesus and Crete. These letters were, no doubt, read to the churches, and thus probably preserved from perishing with the mass of the correspondence of Timothy and Titus.

The Apostle writes to Timothy, "As I besought thee to remain at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some to teach no other doctrine."\* He does not say, that he had appointed him bishop of Ephesus; he does not exhort him to discharge well the duties of a diocesan bishop; he *beseeches* him *to remain* at Ephesus for a special purpose.

In another place he says, "I write unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly, but if I delay, that thou mightest know how to behave thyself,"† &c. How plain does it appear from this verse, that Timothy was discharging a temporary duty as agent of the Apostle, subject to his special directions. Again he says, "Till I come, give attention to reading,"‡ &c.

Among other things the Apostle charges Timothy to "lay hands suddenly on no man."§ If this relates to the ordination of elders, the charge may be given him either as temporary agent of the Apostle, or as to one of many elders, to whom the office of laying on of hands belonged, as much as to himself. It is common for congregationalists to charge a young man, whom they are introducing into the office of a Christian minister, to lay hands suddenly on no man. The same remark applies to the verse, "The things, which thou hast heard from me, amidst many witnesses, these commit thou to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also."|| Whether this verse relate to the imparting of religious instruction, or to the religious service of ordination, it might be addressed to a presbyter, evangelist, or common Christian minister, with as much propriety as to a diocesan bishop. In the same Epistle the Apostle writes to Timothy, "Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me."¶ And "the cloak, which I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, especially the parchments."\*\* These verses confirm the position that

\* 1 Tim. i. 3.      † Ibid. iii. 15.      ‡ Ibid. iv. 13.      § Ibid. v. 22.

|| 2 Tim. ii. 2.      ¶ Ibid. iv. 9.      \*\* Ibid. iv. 13.

Timothy was left at Ephesus, as agent of the Apostle, to discharge a temporary duty. He was bishop of Ephesus no longer than the Apostle could do without his cloak, his books, and his parchments. I may also remark here, in relation to a former part of my argument, that if the Apostle had been under the direction of complete and continual inspiration, it is not easily seen, how he could have forgotten his cloak, his books, and his parchments.

Similar remarks apply to the letter of Paul to Titus. "For this cause," says he, "I left thee at Crete, that thou mightest set right the things that are wanted, and appoint elders in every city, *as I directed.*"\* He does not intimate that Titus had been ordained as bishop of Crete, but that he had left him there as his assistant and agent, to attend to certain business, which he had left unfinished, according to his directions. And towards the end of the letter he tells him to endeavor to come to him shortly at Nicopolis, for he had "determined to winter there."† It is singular that any one can read these letters of the Apostle to Timothy and Titus, without being convinced, that they are written to them simply as young evangelists, his companions, assistants, and agents. But if this be so, they contain nothing in favor of a permanent order of diocesan bishops, whose exclusive right it should be to ordain, to depose, and to govern inferior Christian ministers, and to administer discipline in the churches.

The direction of Paul to Titus was, that he should *appoint* or *establish* elders in every city; *καὶ καταστήσῃς κατὰ πόλιν πρεσβυτίγονας.* The term *καταστήσῃς* denotes not the religious service of inauguration, but the act of appointment. The verse proves as clearly that Titus had the exclusive right of appointment to the eldership, as that he had that of technical ordination, or inauguration, to it. But, as I before observed, it is doubtful whether the Apostle intended anything more, than that Titus should see that elders were appointed, by encouraging the churches to appoint them.

The only remaining argument from Scripture, which has been urged in favor of episcopacy, is derived from the letters, which the author of the Apocalypse represents himself as being directed to write to the "angels" of the seven churches in Asia Minor.‡ It is not easy to say what personages are here denoted by the term angels. When applied to human beings,

\* Titus i. 5.

† Ibid. iii. 12.

‡ Apoc. ch. ii.

it seems to have reference to their office of announcing the will of God. It is applied in the Old Testament to priests and to prophets, and once to the Jewish people as the prophet of the nations. It is also said that in the Hebrew synagogue the person, whose business it was to read, pray, and teach, was called *שליח ציון*, the messenger, or legate, of the congregation.\* So far as the term itself is concerned, it is at least as descriptive of the duty of the presiding officer of a single church, as of that of the overseer of a number of inferior ministers, or of a number of churches.

In the passage in the Apocalypse he is called the angel of the church, not of the churches, of Ephesus, &c., and it cannot be proved that there were more churches than one in either of the cities mentioned in the passage. This consideration is against the opinion that a diocesan bishop is denoted by the angel.

These angels appear to be intimately connected with the churches, and even identified with them, and to have been addressed as responsible for their condition. This consideration favors the supposition that a person intimately connected with a single congregation, rather than one whose duty it was occasionally to visit a number of different churches, was intended by the term.

On the supposition that the term has reference to human beings, the only valid objection to the supposition that it denotes the presbyter, or elder of a single church is, that it is probable that some of the churches which are mentioned had more elders than one. Thus St. Paul called together the elders of the church of Ephesus. If, therefore, by "the angel" of the church of Ephesus is denoted "the elder" of that church, it would seem, as if the practice of giving to one of the elders distinguished by age, or personal character, a special oversight over the concerns of a church, had commenced. This practice cannot elsewhere be proved to have existed in the days of the Apostles, though it probably commenced soon after their death. The standing of such a prime presbyter, *primus inter pares*, would resemble that of senior minister in churches, which have more than one, in our own times. It would be very different from that of a diocesan bishop claiming jurisdiction over several churches, and authority over the ministers of those churches.

\* Vitring. de Synag. Vet. Lib. 3. p. 2. Schoetgen. Hor. Heb. et Tal. pp. 1089 - 1094.

But why may we not understand the term angel in the sense, in which it is most commonly used throughout the Scriptures, and universally in other parts of the Apocalypse? We know that the author of the Apocalypse borrowed much from the writings of the Hebrew prophets; from Ezekiel, Zechariah, and Daniel. Now we know that in the book of Daniel angels are represented as having the charge and oversight of kingdoms, and one is represented as contending with another.\* From the Jewish conceptions concerning angels it was natural, that the guardianship of the churches should be assigned them by a Christian writer imitating the style of the later Hebrew prophets. Why may we not suppose that, in the view of the writer, each of the churches had its guardian angel, who was held responsible for its condition? The blame, which is attached to the angel, is always on account of the state of the church, which is almost identified with its angel. That angels were supposed by the writer to be liable to do wrong, and to be rebuked, is plain from the fact that he represents a war as occurring in heaven between the followers of Michael, and those of Satan.† We read also in the book of Job, "He chargeth his angels with folly, or frailty."‡ \*Similar conceptions prevailed among the Christian fathers.§ According to Origen, the guardian angels of individuals were responsible for their conduct.||

\* Dan. x. 13, 18, 20; xii. 1. † Apoc. xii. 7, &c.

‡ Job iv. 18. See *Christian Examiner* for September, 1830, p. 43.

§ "Magna dignitas animarum, ut unaqueque habeat ab ortu nativitatis in custodiam sui angelum delegatum. Unde legimus in Apocalypsi Johannis, 'Angelo Ephesi, Thyatiræ, et angelo Philadelphiæ, et angelis quatuor reliquarum ecclesiarum, scribe hæc.' Apostolus quoque præcipit velari capita in ecclesiis seminarum, propter angelos." — Jerome on Matt. ch. xviii.

Origen, remarking upon Micah vi. 1, 2, "Contend against the mountains, and let the hills hear thy voice," expresses the opinion that by "the mountains" are denoted angels, to whom the charge of human affairs is committed, according to Deut. xxxii. 8, and Heb. i. 14, and that they were blamed if they badly governed those that were committed to their care, as in the Apocalypse, ch. ii. and iii. Hence Jerome expresses not only the opinion, but almost the very words of Origen: "Sicut enim interdum episcopi culpa est, interdum plebis, et sœpe magister peccat, sœpe discipulus, et nonnunquam patris vitium est, nonnunquam filii, ut vel bene vel male erudiantur, ita in judicio Dei, vel ad angelos crimen referetur, si non egerint cuncta, que ad suum officium pertinebant, vel ad populum, si, illis universa facientibus, ipsi audire contempserint." See Huet's *Origeniana*, Lib. ii. § 32.

|| Spencer ad *Origenis libros contra Celsum*, p. 82.

We have thus seen that the exclusive claims of Episcopacy in regard to the ordination of Christian ministers, have no support in the instructions of Christ and his apostles. On the contrary, we have found much in the records of the Christian revelation that is inconsistent with those claims.

One other source of evidence on this subject is usually referred to, namely, the early history of the church, and the testimony of the ancient Christian fathers. But to undertake to establish, in a part of a single lecture, the genuineness, the meaning, and the consistency of the ancient Christian fathers, would be an idle attempt. It is not pretended that any of the fathers profess to have received from the Apostles, that Episcopal ordination was a divine institution, or that they knew more upon the subject than we may learn from the New Testament. Whatever practice has the testimony of antiquity in its favor, the question still remains, whether this practice is of divine or human origin; a question, which can be decided only by recurrence to the Christian Scriptures. If the practice be of human origin, antiquity is no argument in its favor, unless experience have proved it to be a safe and good practice. What may have been, or appeared to be, good at first, and in certain circumstances, may have been proved by the experience of ages to be unsafe and dangerous. If any mere men are to be followed as fathers, or authoritative guides, in matters of church government, I should choose to follow the pilgrim fathers, who had had some practical acquaintance with a hierarchy, and knew by experience what religious institutions were most favorable to freedom and to peace.

I will, therefore, in relation to the bearing of ecclesiastical history upon this subject, only assert what I believe to be true, and to have been demonstrated by many writers. 1. It cannot be shown that the order of diocesan bishops existed during the first two centuries of the Christian era. If, during that period, bishops are mentioned, it is in such a connexion as to show that they were only overseers of single churches, or moderators amongst presbyters equal to themselves in authority, having no connexion with more than one church, and no exclusive right to ordain Christian ministers. 2. It can be shown that diocesan Episcopacy had a human origin, and a gradual progress. It can be shown that it naturally arose from the circumstances of the early churches, from certain tendencies in human nature on

the part of ministers and people, and from the influence of Jewish and heathen institutions. "From prime-presbyters arose city-bishops; from city-bishops, diocesan ones; from diocesan bishops, metropolitans; from metropolitans, patriarchs; and finally, at the top of all, his holiness the pope, claiming the character of universal head of the church."\*

If it be true, then, that no particular mode of ordination has been enjoined by divine Revelation, and if whatever hints of Apostolic practice occur in the New Testament are wholly unfavorable to the Episcopal claim, then the question of the validity of any mode of ordination resolves itself into a question of utility and expediency. In the absence of divine revelation, that mode of ordination is valid, which secures its end, namely, the furnishing of the church with able and pious ministers, and the promotion of Christian truth and holiness throughout the world. And that mode is best which best agrees with the spirit of Christ, and best answers its end. The experience of two centuries has proved that the practice of New England is as effectual as any other to secure the end of all Christian institutions, and is therefore valid. It will not be denied that the congregational ministers of New England have done as much for the promotion of Christian knowledge, virtue, and piety within the sphere of their influence, and have contributed as much to our theological, and even our general literature, as those of any other denomination in our land. Congregational ordination, then, is valid, because it is efficient. It answers its end.

I will not undertake to say, how much better it is than any other mode. It has in my view the preference, because it invests no class of men with unnecessary power. It is most favorable to the freedom of the soul, and to the progress of truth. According to the New England theory of congregational ordination, every church is entirely independent, not only of the state, but of every other church, and of every class of ministers, whether bishops or presbyters. It acknowledges no authority under Christ, but what is derived from itself. It has no connexion with any other church, or the ministers of any other church, but that of Christian sympathy and charity.

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\* Chauncy's Dudleian Lecture. See also his Views of Episcopacy. Gieseler's Ecclesiastical History, § 29, 52, 66. Christian Examiner for Nov. 1834, p. 180, &c.

Every congregational church is esteemed competent not only to elect, but to ordain, or induct into office, its own officers. "If the people may elect," says the Cambridge Platform, "which is the greater, and that wherein the substance of the office doth consist, they may much more ordain, which is the less, and but the accomplishment of the other." Ordination is merely an appropriate religious service, adapted to produce a good effect upon the subject, and the witnesses, of it, consisting of prayer for a divine blessing upon the person ordained, and the imposition of the hands of the ordinators upon his head, a common Jewish ceremony used to designate the person upon whom a blessing was invoked, and perhaps to set forth the confident assurance that a blessing would be bestowed in answer to prayer. There is nothing in the nature of the service to show, why it should not be performed by any pious and intelligent members of a Christian church. It has, however, been the almost universal practice of the congregational churches of New England to have the services of ordination performed by ordained ministers, invited by the church or society for the purpose. And this is well, provided they maintain and assert their entire independence, when occasion calls for it, and do not allow a human custom to be converted into a divine institution. It is evident that an imagined religious necessity for ordination by a bishop or a presbytery might present a serious obstacle to the progress and profession of the truth. A society, changing its religious opinions, and having the ordination of the teacher of their choice denied them by a bishop, or a presbytery, would be in more unpleasant circumstances, than if they had always asserted the competency of every church to ordain as well as to choose its own ministers. The fundamental congregational principle of the right of ordination by the churches, either by their own members, or by persons of their own choice, is invaluable. It is the only security of the independence of the churches.

There is no reason why any Christian church should be under the government, either of its own ministers, or of other ministers, or of other churches, or all the churches. It is perfectly competent to govern itself. Its purposes do not require any foreign jurisdiction. Every Christian church is a society for mutual improvement, of which all the members are bound by their profession to help each other in Christian knowledge and Christian excellence, and of which he who is employed as the stated religious teacher is bound to devote all his time, and all his

powers to its spiritual advancement. In regard to authority, the minister of a congregational church is but one of the brethren, acting by courtesy as moderator in their meetings, but obliged to put all motions that are made, and having no negative upon the voice of the church. Ecclesiastical councils have no power, but what is given them as arbitrators by the parties which call them, or by the civil law. A congregational church will receive nothing from any foreign source but advice.

If a Christian society esteems itself ill-qualified to judge of the capacity or attainments of a candidate for the ministry, it may be well for it to take the advice of a modern bishop; better, of an ecclesiastical council of presbyters, or scripture bishops. This has been, in past times, and may be still, a good practice. But it is not the only mode of ascertaining the qualifications of a candidate. A recommendation from the professors of a well-conducted theological school would have more weight with me, than the imposition of the hands of forty bishops, or a hundred presbyters, upon the head of the candidate.

Judging from loose impressions of the analogies of civil government, some may condemn the congregational plan as too democratic. But it is not more democratic than is warranted by the lessons of ecclesiastical history, which shows that nearly all the dissensions and crimes, which have disgraced the Christian church, have arisen from too much government. The principal objects of civil government and of Christianity are entirely different. The former has to do with outward actions. Its object is to restrain, to protect the rights of persons and property from outward aggression, to secure outward conveniences and opportunities. Christianity has to do with the inner man, the understanding, the conscience, the heart, and therefore needs no influence, but that of truth and persuasion. The genuine disciples of Christ are a willing people. They follow their heavenly shepherd voluntarily, because they know his voice; and no other voice of authority, but his, do they know.

There is no such need of a hierarchy, as of a strong civil government. When Mr. Burke said that he would have the Christian religion "lift its mitred head in courts and parliaments," it was because he regarded it as a part and parcel of civil government, and lost sight of the spirit of Christ, and the very nature of religion. Much more truly was it said by a greater man than Edmund Burke, that "such a ministry as is founded upon the points and terms of superiority, and nests itself in

worldly honors, will draw to it, as we see it doth, such a religion as runs back again to the old pomp and glory of the flesh ; for doubtless there is a certain attraction and magnetic force betwixt the religion and the ministerial form thereof. If the religion be pure, spiritual, simple, and lowly, as the gospel most truly is, such must the face of the ministry be. And in like manner, if the form of the ministry be grounded in the worldly degrees of authority, honor, temporal jurisdiction, we see with our eyes it will turn the inward power and purity of the gospel into the outward carnality of the law ; evaporating and exhaling the internal worship into empty conformities, and gay shows.”\*

While we set a just value upon what has been done by our ancestors for the independence of separate churches, and for putting it out of the power of a hierarchy to oppress or perplex all the churches in the land at once, we acknowledge that they did not attain the true idea of Christian liberty, the freedom of individual conscience. This in fact cannot be secured by any institutions, or constitutions. A majority of an independent church have it in their power to oppress individual conscience, as effectually as a bishop, or a presbytery. The difference is only in the extent to which such a power can be exerted. It is but too true, that congregational churches have imposed shackles upon the individual soul by means of creeds and church censures, and that they do it at the present day. And for one, I should be as willing to have my faith and conscience in the keeping of a bishop, a presbytery, a convocation, a general assembly, or the holy father of Rome, as in that of the majority of an independent church, in a place where my lot in life may be cast. Our ancestors have been jealous enough of the domination of the state over the church, and of one church over another. They have maintained the independence of separate churches. But independence of foreign control does not necessarily secure individual freedom in a church, or a country. There is no true individual freedom, where dissent from the opinions of a majority of a church is treated as a crime, as it has been, and is now, in many of the congregational churches in New England.

It is said, to be sure, that a man may leave the church, whose creed and usages he does not like, and join another. So a Turk may quit his country ; but does this prove that there is freedom

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\* Selections from Milton's Prose Works, Vol. I. p. 109.

in the dominions of the Sultan? In many places a person cannot enjoy Christian privileges, except with a church from a majority of which he may differ in his opinions.

Besides, it is not true that a person is permitted to leave many of the churches in good standing. He must be warned, tried, censured, excommunicated, and thrust out. And the pain thus inflicted will be greater or less, according to the sensibility of the individual, and the state of public sentiment. In some places, such a proceeding will be regarded with contempt. In others, it will operate like the deprivation of caste in India, or the interdiction of fire and water, and make one the object of abhorrence to the community for qualities, which ought to engage their highest esteem.

Individual freedom, freedom of conscience, freedom of thought, freedom of speech and of writing, can be secured by no forms of ecclesiastical or civil society. It depends upon a correct understanding, and a just appreciation of the principles of civil and Christian liberty in the body of the people. Where the living spirit of freedom and toleration does not exist in a community, an attorney general may suppress religious discussion, and stop the pens of theologians, by his denunciations, as effectually as an inquisitor general by his faggots.

In regard to the church of Christ, the only foundation of Christian liberty is the prevalence of the principle, that every one, in whatever community he may be placed, has a right to enjoy Christian privileges, when he professes his faith in the Christian religion, as he understands it, and believes that Christ taught it.\* There is no supreme tribunal to decide what Christianity is, but the tribunal of the individual conscience. Any church, which repels or excludes an individual from its communion, who is willing to profess his faith

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\* President Wayland, in his valuable essay on Human Responsibility, p. 132, having stated that every individual church is "under obligations to leave to the conscience of every member precisely what Christ has left to his conscience; and a man, when he joins a church, submits himself to the laws of Christ and to no other," says, with no little inconsistency, on the next page, "it is not to be forgotten that a man, when he joins a church, professes to understand the doctrines and precepts of Christ, *as that church understands them.*" Considered as a statement of fact, this is far from being correct; considered as a statement of principle, it is without foundation in the Christian Religion, and would in many places, even in extensive regions of country, deprive true Christians of Christian privileges.

in the Christian religion, as he understands it, and believes that Christ taught it, is guilty of a violation of the principles on which the Christian church was founded, and acts in opposition to the spirit of Christ, which is a spirit of liberty. For where the spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. And any individual, who is afraid of inquiry, and of avowing his opinions, lest he should incur the censure of the majority of a congregational church, is as truly in a state of spiritual slavery, as if he were under the government of the bishop of Rome.

Indeed, there is good reason to believe; that, so far as doctrinal opinions are concerned, there is more freedom of religious discussion in Catholic, as well as Protestant Germany, at the present day, than in republican Massachusetts. One cause of this fact may be the prevalence of religious indifference upon the continent of Europe. Another cause, I apprehend, is, that the value of mental freedom is better understood, more deeply felt, and more widely acknowledged in Germany than in our own country. Intolerance, I fear, prevails to an alarming extent in our land, and with it, its concomitant sin of hypocrisy.

But is there not danger of licentiousness of discussion? Is there not danger that the faith of the multitude may be weakened, or undermined, by a too free discussion of religious subjects? Undoubtedly, there is danger. But there is more danger, I apprehend, from the suppression, or denunciation, of free discussion. In the former case, you may corrupt the heads of hearers or readers; in the latter, you corrupt the hearts of speakers and writers. You poison the fountains of instruction. In my opinion the besetting sin of Christian teachers always has been, is now, and always will be, the sin of hypocrisy, rather than that of too hasty a publication of new opinions. Nothing can be worse for the community, or for the Christian church, than the necessity of esoteric and exoteric opinions; one set to be whispered in theological seminaries, and another to be preached or printed for the world; the truth to be kept as a luxury for theologians, and delusion to be dealt out to the people.

The want of the publication of correct opinions relating to the true character and use of the Scriptures, both of the Old and New Testament, is, in my view, the cause of more infidelity, than any of the labors of its advocates. And it is worthy of consideration whether unbelief in a future state of retribution has not gained ground more rapidly in our country, than it

would have done, if enlightened theologians, and enlightened men, had preached and published more freely their settled convictions relating to the future condition and destination of man.

Without doubt a deep responsibility rests upon every one, who undertakes to publish his sentiments to the world, especially when they differ from the popular belief. A man may sin against his own soul, against his fellow-men, and against God, by the publication of crude and hasty opinions. Let such opinions be exposed, or even ridiculed. Let incorrect opinions be rejected, or refuted. Let not the young be swift to publish the new views, which captivate them. If sound, they will not spoil by being kept, even to the ninth year. But let no censure be inflicted upon any one, who gives evidence of deep thought, diligent research, and conscientious fidelity, whatever may be the nature of the opinions, which he advances. Let every one be encouraged to bring forth from the depths of his soul the fruits of his meditations and researches, without fear of being made a victim to popular prejudice through the denunciations of the magistrate, the press, or the church. In this way alone will a genuine, vigorous Christian faith arise out of the present chaos of unsettled opinions throughout the world. Thus alone will the truth extend its triumphs, and bring into subjection to its divine power the intelligent, as well as the simple, the profound inquirer, as well as the confiding child. Thus shall he reign, whose right it is to reign, over the convinced understanding, the willing soul, the obedient heart. Even so come, Lord Jesus ! Come quickly !

ART. V.—*The Principles and Results of the Ministry at Large, in Boston.* By JOSEPH TUCKERMAN. Boston : James Munroe & Co. 1838. 12mo. pp. 327.

THIS book treats of the moral dangers and needs of cities, how they are met by the institution in question, its claims to closer application and wider extension, and the great principles of Christian union and progress it should embody. It is a book of peculiar interest, as being the result of personal expe-

rience and convictions fixed deep by actual knowledge. As a testimony to the joy and hope of spiritual toil in the most unpromising fields, it is of great value. The curious of new ideas and the critical in matters of rhetoric it may not please, but it will quicken the heart of piety and philanthropy.

The ministry at large seems to us the noblest expression of that idea of moral culture, which more than any other marks the age. The workings of this idea are seen everywhere in the increasing reverence for moral above intellectual greatness; in the preference of more pure and healthful compositions than the passionate literature of the school of Byron and Bulwer; in efforts, as in the Prussian dominions, to make education a science, with religion for its prime subject; in the higher tone of the public displays of young men in colleges; in enthusiasm upon the cardinal question of true manhood and a holy life, more than upon questions in natural philosophy and learning; and lastly in the present remarkable agitation of points of moral principle, respecting Temperance, Sunday Schools, Peace, the emancipation of the Slave, preaching to the Poor. Some of these workings are deformed by extravagances and visionary schemes and unrighteous instruments. And thus many justify their selfish clamor against all reform. But no crusade can prosper against the striving of moral principle. Let it be purified, but not warred against, for it must conquer.

The ministry at large seems to us one of the most quiet and effectual charities of the age. Away from public glare, it studies the wants of individual sufferers. Instead of imposing a pledge, it strengthens the moral will. Without concerted attempts to alter the whole face of society, it nourishes the private virtue of thousands. We have just been reading letters from the prison and the sea, that give thrilling proof of its influence,—and there is an account in the volume before us of the moral hold that may be gotten over criminals, that should touch our sensibilities. This ministry grew out of the undeniable fact, criticise as we may any numerical statements of it, that a large proportion of the inhabitants in this city had no means of Christian instruction. Catholicism in theory includes all under its confessional. Protestantism is the religion of liberty, and leaves multitudes without its pale. To reach some of these among us was the aim of the first conceiver of the ministry at large. He was passed with averted eye by some, who thought it a dreamy project to expect quiet visiting among a few dwell-

ings of poor persons would produce a palpable extension of the domain of Christianity. But this unlikely experiment now shows its fruit in two noble chapels devoted in every corner to Christian uses, centres of influence on a thousand homes, in the assignment by city authority of a piece of ground for a third, in the zealous performance of its ministers, in aspirations of young men to the work, and in a life and interest through all its operations unsurpassed by anything in the regular churches. The same influence in New York is co-extensive with the city, though not all under the name of this ministry. It has been sensibly felt in England. And there are some indications it may be introduced into other places in our own country.

And let none be offended at what they may think enthusiastic exaggerations of the importance of this particular work. The object to which one devotes his life fills his vision. We believe the sincere Christian laborer is equally accepted in whatever sphere, whether he illustrate the evidences of Christianity, or the character of Christ, or the old dispensation,—whether he be an artist or traveller, a merchant or mechanic. It is not the occupation, but the degree in which the moral element is shown through it, which makes him acceptable. And surely through nothing has it been shown more abundantly than the ministry at large.

The whole idea of this ministry has been objected to as separating rich and poor. But in fact it is reuniting what has been separated indeed, raising the levels of poverty, lowering the summits of pride. When we consider from what social rank have risen some of those who have exercised it, whence the young teachers, men and maidens, in its Sunday and sewing schools, and what the position of a multitude of families, that give sympathy and help, we shall see that so far from dividing the classes of society, it is realizing the hope of the Savior's prayer, that all might be one.

This ministry is honorable indeed to the denomination of Christians that gave it birth, and to the particular churches associated for its support. But does not its past service and present state demand a more thorough provision for its support? Much as we like the self-sacrifice of those who have entered it, a minister at large must have a subsistence. And we cannot expect ability will be drawn to this work, without a respectable support even as a token of sympathy. Circumstances enable some nobly to do with less, but others would gladly

come, in regard to whom all the more should the principle be applied, that the laborer is worthy of his hire. And what is money in comparison with the persuasion to kindle and the sympathy to soothe the bruised hearts beating beneath unnumbered roofs ! It may be thought, men should be willing to sacrifice themselves in such a cause ; but should we be willing to sacrifice them in such a cause ! Dr. Tuckerman has given in his book some hints of a new plan, to which we would ask a candid consideration. It does not become us to express an opinion upon details, that wiser judgments might overrule.

In considering the ministry's claim to further aid or establishment elsewhere, the question has always been urged, and justly, as to its actual results. Here it should be considered that its aim is moral ; not so much to subdue the cries of physical pain, as " those groanings that cannot be uttered," — the heart-sickness of ignorance and vice, of which most outward distresses are but varying symptoms. The ministers at large are indeed to some extent almoners, for actual suffering has its imperative claim, and misfortune sometimes is worthy of aid. But this is incidental and superficial. The aim is to cure the moral disease, which poor laws, alms-houses, and societies for widows and orphans have so generally neglected. Poverty and toil and natural pains it does not consider evils, but God's discipline. It would not produce that " pleasing land of drowsy head " shown in many a rich man's " Castle of Indolence." But it expounds the mercy that made the earth a mass of stones and dirt, instead of a universal garden, and it shows every blow of honest labor developing an energy of soul, that enables the poor man to pity the pale afternoon-lounger and morning-sleeper. Its aim is not the low pretence of a selfish politics to equalize men's condition, but to show that condition itself depends mainly on character,— and that not he who has the greatest estate most enjoys the world, but he who dwelling in this immense common of all nature is most excited to love and to pray. It would do away with that love of money, which is the root of all evil, among poor as well as rich ; for the poor man's envy appraises wealth as highly as the rich man's pride.

The results of the ministry at large are chiefly in stilling noises instead of making them, preventing histories of war instead of bringing reports of that peace, which has always been found too sublime in its subtle workings for the historian.

Wherefore should the public prints waste an exclamation-point upon the order and love, and temperance and purity, made to take the place of confusion and disobedience, drunkenness and pollution. But some things we may state with more particularity. Since the establishment of this ministry, though the city has greatly increased, street beggary has diminished one half. Crimes are often prevented, and their sources continually dried up. Pauperism is gradually passing away among the Protestant population, and poverty is less extensive and extreme. Physical suffering has been checked not so much by helping, as encouraging the needy to help themselves. There is much less for courts and jails to do, than there would be without this ministry. And moral suffering has been prevented or consoled in cases without number, and to an extent beyond calculation.

We will specify some classes of persons, and the way they have been blessed by this institution.

First, that large class of persons who are not sunk in abject poverty or misfortune, yet have not means to bear the expense involved in a connexion with our regular churches. Multitudes of these are visited and drawn into church, till their delight is in worship and religious meditation. Merely the known existence of such a place, as a Chapel open to all, does much. Its invitation to worship goes into every lane, and brings forth misery and grief to the light. Truly it is a candlestick of the Lord searching into every dark place.

Then there are constantly occurring *unfortunate* persons. They have got along very well without the institutions of religion, with idle or passionate sabbaths and prayerless homes, until abject poverty, or sharp disease, or death entering the door awakes them to their helplessness. Then does it appear that the office of the pastor is founded in human nature. Then they welcome the services they once fled. They long for his presence to encourage them, to save them from the awfulness of anguish without hope, to console the bereaved husband, to baptize the dying child. Providence sometimes sends a succession of troubles that leave no anchor to the soul, but that fixed on the eternal shore. And we have seen persons hanging above the gulf of despair and madness by this single thread of the ministry at large.

Then in the chances and revolutions of a great city there come many *unfriended* persons. The populous street makes

them more lonely than in a desert, as they seem to walk to the lips in the flowing of social joys which they cannot taste. And when a stranger in town, unknowing where to turn his hand, discouraged by waiting, tempted to sin, is met by the minister at large, offered a seat in the Chapel, furnished perhaps with work for a livelihood,—especially when the as yet innocent one, for whom snares are laying, is placed in some respectable family, and made a worshipper in God's house,—we can forgive the minister at large his enthusiasm and his tears.

Again; the influence of the ministry at large upon *infidelity* depends not on speculation, but abundant fact. Many are the unbelievers whom it has softened to view more favorably our social Christian institutions, led into a course of religious reading and worship, and inspired in the hour of death with the hope full of glory. Infidels are prejudiced often not so much against Christianity as Christians, and they cannot resist a Christian spirit.

This institution has done a great and almost unacknowledged good to the *intemperate*, in visiting their families, persuading them to moral struggles, cheering their wives and children, and in extreme cases relieving these from the dead weight and furious passion of drunkenness, by procuring for the head of the family an abode in the house of correction. Sometimes it has undoubtedly prevented the most dreadful crimes. And how much better the spiritual influence by which it has sometimes reformed the drunkard, than the jail and gallows of government, or the necessarily more superficial influence of an association, extensive and blessed in some respects as this may be.

This ministry has been a great blessing to the *sick* among the poor. The relief given to these by the Dispensary is an honor to the city. But sickness is something more than a disorder in the body. It is vitally related to the well-being of the soul. The minister at large explains its meaning, that it may heal the spirit while it wastes the frame. And we know that some of the noblest examples of patient suffering, working out immortal joy, cheer his efforts.

One of the most touching benefits of the ministry at large is to *children*. There is no more mournful sight than of the young breathing an atmosphere of physical and moral pollution, sucking in poison with their mothers' milk, and growing

up for degradation and crime by an irresistible necessity. It is a reproach to the Christian and the citizen that cries to be wiped away. There is no holier work on which angels and God can look down with more pleasure than their rescue, which this institution is continually affording, by collecting them in Sunday Schools, sending them to the children's friend's asylum, the female orphan's asylum, the house of reformation, and the farm school. With the Chapel in Pitts street are connected in some way of instruction about six hundred children, with nearly one hundred teachers, besides a society of young men for "mutual improvement in knowledge and virtue." A very large number of children and teachers is connected with the Chapel in Warren street, all whose operations bear chiefly on the education of the young. Mr. Sargent, who visits in about three hundred families, has collected in the Sabbath school about one hundred and thirty children. Mr. Waterston, who labors in the north part of the city, holds two religious services for children every Sunday, in addition to the Sunday school, and the average attendance in his school is almost one hundred and forty. Those, who would be informed more particularly of the late operations of the ministry at large, are referred to the "Fourth Annual Report of the central board of the Benevolent Fraternity of Churches."

And almost as affecting is the cheering this ministry gives to the *Aged*, to whom weakness and sickness allow little relief, such as the young may get, from the discomforts of their dark, narrow, and damp abodes. What a moral advance in society is signified, by this one fact of the change from the practice of savage wandering tribes leaving the old behind to perish, and a Christian ministry visiting, soothing, and gladdening with immortal hopes their last days.

But much of the good influence of this ministry is connected with the chapel, as well as visiting. The joys of public worship, the collection of families, ordinarily less bound together than the rich, into one family, the great refreshment from labor, which makes Sunday emphatically a day of rest to them, the prevention of much crime, profaneness, and reveling, which leisure would occasion, by absorbing their minds in the noblest of all acts,— and the drawing of those, who have been kindly visited at home, to receive solemn inculcations of duty in the house of God,— together with the awakenings of conscience

and convictions of duty often there first produced, — show how important an instrument is the Chapel to the ministry at large.

We regret that the claims of this Charity cannot be presented with their just force to the public, they depend so much upon details which there is no space to give. But every general statement here made could be backed by a long array of particular cases. And they, who would learn the real work which the ministry at large is doing, should apply to those actively engaged in its service, such as Mr. Gray, Mr. Barnard, Mr. Sargent, and Mr. Waterston. The highest principles of morality are involved in the minutiae of daily life.

The ministry at large exerts a highly important influence upon the rich, as well as the poor. They have been chiefly concerned in establishing it, and they have been rewarded for their labor of love, not only in the greater quiet of the streets, security of their property and dwellings, moral safety and often occupation in good works of their children, but in their own bosoms. The tendencies to caste and accumulation have been checked, the true objects of society and life kept more steadily in view, purifying the morality of business, and the essential equality of men shown by the actual results of culture. Many of the rich have been blessed by the engagement of their personal sympathies and active aid in this holy enterprise. We trust the moral amalgamation of society will go on, till men shall no longer be divided by superficial distinctions, but united in great principles, pursuits, and joys. We long for the time when men shall no longer devote themselves to mere accumulation, or sacrifice themselves to luxury, — or the young be the slaves of mammon by expectance, charmed to their undoing by the wily demon's look, before coming to his deadly embrace. We long for the time when employers and employed, journeyman and artisan, agent and operative, captain and crew, shall be bound in the bonds of good will, as well as necessity and law, with common health and happiness, — and when war and slavery shall no longer indicate the disease of the human soul. We are impatient for the time when we may witness from each to all *manners* of warmth, instead of coldness, humbleness and meekness, instead of superciliousness and pride, sincerity and truth, instead of affectation and pretension. We hail from afar the day when the *family* shall realize its design, and be an image of heavenly society ; when parents shall be ambitious not only of more than making their child a good hunter or

soldier, but of more than raising him to shine in a certain rank or succeed in a profession, and desire to make him a good man who shall glorify any rank or toil! And when that true love, which cannot be confined to two bosoms, or to any restricted circle, shall be seen spreading, subtler than light or heat, from soul to soul throughout the world.

And in this view we sympathize with all the sincere moral undertakings of the day. We mourn indeed the sacrifice of individual character, and the excesses of heated sympathy. We lament to see men sunk in the host like soldiery, none standing out but ambitious leaders in their plumes. Still these undertakings are signs of life among the dead. And perhaps their great benefit is not the removal of the particular evils assailed, but the generation of spiritual strength to be applied to other evils and all iniquity, and, unconfined to one bosom or another, to spread kindling from land to land, from age to age. Who, in this view, can calculate the influence of a single soul, like Luther, Howard, Wilberforce? Their best legacy was not perhaps their reformation of the church, relief of the prisoner, manumission of the enslaved, but their regenerating influence to endure with their own immortality. Their unextinguished souls from the firmament still guide us over the sea of life. The benefit to the world of such a man as Noah Worcester lies not chiefly in his writings, which we carefully collect, but in his pure and peaceful soul, inspiring admiration, and forming its own likeness in others, travelling down to children's children, another proof of the possibility of disinterested love, and keeping the image of Jesus in the world, not as recorded on paper, but written in the fleshly tables of the heart. Let not such things be in vain. The dust virtue leaves in its coffin we follow with mournful love to the tomb, and mark its resting place with marble shrines, till our city of the dead is richer than the streets and temples of the living. But even a heathen writer could tell us there is a grander monument to the praise of goodness in the heart. Let the inscription be wrought there, and the just made perfect will recognise it, when the tombs are burst, and this earth and these heavens have passed away.

C. A. B.

**ART. VI.—Correspondence between the Hon. F. H. Elmore, one of the South Carolina Delegation in Congress, and James G. Birney, one of the Secretaries of the American Anti-Slavery Society.** New York: Published by the American Anti-Slavery Society. 1838. 8vo. pp. 68.

THIS "Correspondence" marks a striking and important change in the course of the Anti-Slavery movement which pervades every part of our country. Hitherto all the efforts made at the North to induce the South to abolish Slavery, and more particularly the publications of the Anti-Slavery Societies, have been repulsed with indignation, and their entrance into the slaveholding states has been opposed by protestations, resolutions, and laws. Travellers from the North, if in any way suspected of abolition principles, have had their trunks opened in search of "incendiary" publications. Nay, in one of the principal southern cities, the sanctity of the public mail has been violated by a mob, headed by some of the most influential citizens; some papers addressed to slaveholders, admonishing the slaves to submission, and the masters to repentance, were condemned by this self-constituted court of inquisition to be burned by a public auto da fe; and finally, the proceeding was justified by the chief officer, to whose care the safety of the mail was entrusted by the General Government. The more effectually to prevent the discussion of this subject from affecting the mass of the people at the South, the freedom of debate and the right of petition were infringed in Congress; and the governors and legislatures of the free states were solicited by southern governments to repress, within their own jurisdiction, all associations, assemblies, and publications, having for their object the abolition of slavery in this country.

After all these and many other attempts of the slaveholding South, to prevent the advancing tide of northern "fanaticism" from undermining the "corner-stone of the republican edifice;" after all the fierce denunciations and threats of dissolving the Union,—we find the Representatives of the slaveholding states, at the last session of Congress, raising a committee "to ascertain the intentions and progress of the Anti-Slavery Associations;" and the South Carolina member of this committee, in its behalf, addressing to the First Secretary of the American Anti-Slavery Society the following calm and respectful request

for authentic information on this important subject. We quote Mr. Elmore's letter from the Pamphlet that stands at the head of this article.

“ WASHINGTON CITY, FEB. 16, 1838.

“ To JAS. G. BIRNEY, Esq., Cor. Sec. A. A. S. Soc.

“ Sir : — A letter from you to the Hon. John C. Calhoun, dated 29th January last, has been given to me, by him, in which you say, (in reference to the abolitionists or Anti-Slavery Societies,) ‘ we have nothing to conceal,— and should you desire any information as to our procedure, it will be cheerfully communicated on [my] being apprised of your wishes.’ The frankness of this unsolicited offer indicates a fairness and honesty of purpose, which has caused the present communication, and which demands the same full and frank disclosure of the views with which the subjoined inquiries are proposed.

“ Your letter was handed to me, in consequence of a duty assigned me by my delegation, and which requires me to procure all the authentic information I can, as to the nature and intentions of yours and similar associations, in order that we may, if we deem it advisable, lay the information before our people, so that they may be prepared to decide understandingly, as to the course it becomes them to pursue on this all-important question. If you ‘ have nothing to conceal,’ and it is not imposing too much on, what may have been, an unguarded proffer, I will esteem your compliance as a courtesy to an opponent, and be pleased to have an opportunity to make a suitable return. And if, on the other hand, you have the least difficulty or objection, I trust you will not hesitate to withhold the information sought for, as I would not have it, unless as freely given, as it will, if deemed expedient, be freely used.

“ I am, Sir,

Your ob'd't serv't,

F. H. ELMORE, of S. C.”

Then follows a list of questions concerning the number, object, means, and income of the Anti-Slavery Societies in this country, and their connexion with similar foreign societies,— to which Mr. Birney returns a full and minute reply, introduced by the following remarks.

“ ANTI-SLAVERY OFFICE, New York, March 8, 1838.

“ Hon. F. H. ELMORE,

Member of Congress from S. Carolina :

“ SIR,— I take pleasure in furnishing the information you have so politely asked for, in your letter of the 16th ult., in relation

to the American Anti-Slavery Society ; — and trust, that this correspondence, by presenting in a sober light the objects and measures of the Society, may contribute to dispel, not only from your mind, but — if it be diffused throughout the South, — from the minds of our fellow-citizens there generally, a great deal of undeserved prejudice and groundless alarm. I cannot hesitate to believe, that such as enter on the examination of its claims to public favor, without bias, will find that it aims intelligently, not only at the promotion of the interests of the slave, but of the master, — not only at the reanimation of the Republican principles of our Constitution, but at the establishment of the Union on an enduring basis."

The impression made by this reply may be judged of from a letter of Mr. Elmore to Mr. Birney, dated Washington, May 5, 1838, from which we extract these words.

"I was induced to enter into a correspondence with you, who, by your official station and intelligence, were known to be well informed on these points, and, from your well established character for candor and fairness, would make no statements of facts which were not known or believed by you to be true. To a great extent, my end has been accomplished by your replies to my inquiries.

"We differed no wider than I expected, but that difference has been exhibited courteously."

The history and character of Mr. Birney, who now holds the most responsible office in the American Anti-Slavery Society, has become more generally known in this part of our country, by the eloquent letter that the persecution, of which Mr. Birney was the innocent object, drew forth from one to whom until then he was a stranger. The letter of the Rev. Dr. William E. Channing to Mr. Birney, occasioned by the Cincinnati mob which destroyed his printing press and threatened his life, has been so extensively read and admired, that a simple reference to it is sufficient to induce every one of our readers to receive his statements, with the same confidence with which they were relied upon by his generous antagonist from South Carolina. The ability of Mr. Birney to judge of this subject in all its bearings will be doubted by no one, who knows that he was born and educated at the South, and held a high standing as a lawyer in Alabama, and in Kentucky ; and that he was himself a slaveholder, and an efficient member and agent of the Colonization Society, until the perusal of Anti-Slavery publications im-

pressed him with the duty of immediate emancipation. He liberated his slaves, who continued to work for him faithfully, as hired laborers; and relinquished his connexion with the Colonization Society, from a conviction of its obvious inability as well as professed unwillingness to extinguish, and its natural tendency to secure the existence of slavery in this country. Being persuaded that the preservation of our Union, and the still more important object for which the Union was formed, depended on the prevalence of those views of duty which he had adopted and acted out in the unconditional emancipation of his own slaves, Mr. Birney undertook the publication of the *Philanthropist*, at Cincinnati. Clearness of views, singleness of purpose, and devotion to the cause of humanity distinguished this publication. But while it engaged more and more the confidence and sympathy of the disinterested portion of the community, its growing popularity roused the selfish fears of those, who evidently thought more of the danger of offending their slaveholding customers and neighbors, than of the claims of their enslaved fellowmen, the liberty of the press, and the sacredness of the laws of a free state. The firmness, mildness, and Christian heroism which characterized Mr. Birney's conduct during the disgraceful reign of the Cincinnati mob, the lofty unconcern with which he continued to edit his paper under incessant threats, roused at last the community from their guilty indifference and delusion. The *Philanthropist* was gaining subscribers, not only in Ohio, but in every part of the country, when the American Anti-Slavery Society called for the services of its Editor, in the important office which he now holds.

We have made these remarks on the character of Mr. Birney, with a view to lay before our readers some of the statements contained in his correspondence with Mr. Elmore, concerning the present condition of the American Anti-Slavery Society,—accompanied by remarks, for which it is hardly necessary to mention, no one except the author of this article is responsible. Our object is to present the Anti-Slavery cause in the light in which it appears to the Abolitionists.

The matter contained in the replies to the fourteen questions of Mr. Elmore, may be conveniently arranged under these heads.

I. What is the number of Abolitionists, and Anti-Slavery Societies in this country?

II. What is their object?

III. What are the means by which they intend to accomplish it?

IV. What are the probable effects of the events of the last year, and especially of the action of Congress, on the hopes and efforts of the Abolitionists?

V. What connexion is there between the Anti-Slavery Societies of this country, and similar foreign societies?

We shall confine our remarks to the subjects contained in the three first questions.

I. The *number* of societies affiliated with the American Anti-Slavery Society, as reported at its last anniversary (on Tuesday immediately preceding the second Thursday in May) was one thousand three hundred and forty-six, averaging, according to the lowest estimate, not less than eighty members each, making an aggregate of one hundred and seven thousand six hundred and eighty.

"Those, who stand *ready to join* our societies on the first suitable occasion, may be set down as equal in number to those who are now *actually members*. Those, who are ready *fully to coöperate with us* in supporting the freedom of speech and the press, the right of petition, &c., may be estimated at *double*, if not *treble*, the joint numbers of those who *already are members*, and those who are *ready to become members*. The Recording Secretary of the MASSACHUSETTS SOCIETY stated, a few weeks ago, that the Abolitionists in the various minor societies in that state, were one in thirty of the whole population. The proportion of Abolitionists to the whole population is greater in Massachusetts than in any other of the free states, except VERMONT, where the spirit of liberty has almost entirely escaped the corruptions which slavery has infused into it in most of her sister states, by means of commercial and other intercourse with them." — p. 11.

Mr. Birney remarks that of late the multiplication of societies has not kept pace with the progress of Anti-Slavery principles, because in proportion as these pervade the mass of the people, the organization of societies is deemed less necessary.

It is, however, not uninteresting to consider the annual numeral increase of Abolition Societies, since the year 1832. It was then that the voice of one crying in the wilderness, waxing louder and louder in the general indifference, found a response in a few hearts. A small number of men, citizens of Boston,

determined to join in the devoted labors, and to share the contumely and detestation that fastened upon the disinterested and uncompromising efforts of the obscure printer, — who had dared to take upon himself openly the office of a servant of servants. They formed the first Anti-Slavery Society in New England, January 1832. On the 4th of December 1833, the American Anti-Slavery Society was formed. From that time the number of affiliated societies has increased in the following ratio. In May 1834, there were sixty and odd auxiliaries reported. In May 1835, two hundred and twenty-five. In May 1836, five hundred and twenty-seven. In May 1837, one thousand and six. In May 1838, one thousand three hundred and forty-six.

II. The *object* of these Societies is stated in the second article of the Constitution of the American Anti-Slavery Society, which is in these words :

“ ‘The object of this society is the entire abolition of slavery in the United States. While it admits that each state, in which slavery exists, has, by the Constitution of the United States, the exclusive right to *legislate* in regard to its abolition in said state, it shall aim to convince all our fellow-citizens, by arguments addressed to their understandings and consciences, that slaveholding is a heinous crime in the sight of God, and that the duty, safety, and best interests of all concerned require its immediate abandonment, without expatriation. The Society will also endeavor, in a constitutional way, to influence Congress to put an end to the domestic slave-trade, and to abolish slavery in all those portions of our common country which come under its control, especially in the District of Columbia ; and likewise to prevent the extension of it to any state that may hereafter be admitted to the Union.’ ”

“ Other objects, accompanied by a pledge of peace, are stated in the third article of the Constitution.—

“ ‘This Society shall aim to elevate the character and condition of the people of color, by encouraging their intellectual, moral, and religious improvement, and by removing public prejudice,— that thus they may, according to their intellectual and moral worth, share an equality with the whites of civil and religious privileges ; but this Society will never in any way countenance the oppressed in vindicating their rights by resorting to physical force.’ ”

The opposition of the abolitionists to slavery does not rest on the supposition that the slaves are not kindly treated, or that they are not happy. In many instances they undoubtedly experience all the kindness that is compatible with the unnatural condition in which they are placed by that act of fundamental unkindness, which dooms them from their birth to a state of bondage, "the continuance of which," as William Pinkney said, "is as shameful as its origin." As for the alleged happiness of the slaves, the advertisements of runaway servants, blacksmiths, carpenters, cooks, &c., which crowd every Southern newspaper, might excite some doubts with regard to the fact. But if it be true indeed, it is so much the worse. For we hold with Edmund Burke, that "nothing makes a happy slave but a degraded man. In proportion as the mind grows callous to its degradation, and all sense of manly pride is lost, the slave feels comfort." Abolitionists contend for the abolition of slavery, simply because it is absolutely wrong and morally impossible for a man to hold property in his fellow-man. But they do not speak of slavery "in the abstract," as it is called, any more than of abolition in the abstract. "A very singular kind of logic," said Mr. Garrison, in the First Annual Report of the New England Anti-Slavery Society, "prevails at the present day. 'I concede,' says one, 'that slavery in the abstract is very wicked, but I am opposed to immediate abolition.' Slavery in the *abstract*! What does the objector mean? His language implies nothing else than that it is most atrocious to *think* of enslaving human beings; but in fact to buy, or sell, or hold them in fetters, is by no means sinful."

The Address of the New England Anti-Slavery Convention to the People of the United States contains the following review of slavery in a civil and religious point of view.

"The Declaration of Independence proves the unlawfulness of the government established over the slave, in the same terms in which it justifies the self-government of the free. For it asserts that all government among men derives its just powers from the *consent of the governed*; that it is instituted to secure the *inalienable rights* of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness, with which all men are endowed *equally* by their *Creator*.

"These self-evident truths, set forth in that document of philanthropic wisdom and heroism, are borne out by the testimony of inspiration. Let us place side by side the law of the white

man, concerning his colored fellow-man, and the law of God, concerning all his children.

"God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.' Negro slavery denies God in man; the children do not recognise their Father's likeness, because it has pleased Him to set it in a dark frame.

"The Son of God says, 'Be not ye called masters; for one is your master; one is your Father; and all ye are brethren.' This universal brotherhood, established by the God of nature, the Father of spirits, has it induced the white man, the professed Christian, to see in his colored fellow-man, a child of God, to be respected and loved by him, as he respects and loves himself? Look at the history of negro slavery. All its authentic records, all its unpublished volumes may be summed up in one sentence. The white man, the professed Christian, has treated his brother, the colored man, first, as a beast of prey, and then as a beast of burthen and of draught.

"The Son of Man farther says, 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.' And, 'with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged; and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.' To do unto others as we would have them do unto us,—if this be the great law of justice by which we shall be judged,—what must we think, we do not say of the *men*, for we would not interfere between them and their own consciences,—but what must we think of the *laws* of our slaveholding states and territories, which the white inhabitants have made, and which the whole country has sanctioned? The law secures to the white man, the poorest as well as the richest, whatever property he inherits, or gains by his own industry, or by exchange with others. The earnings of the slave, the fruits of his life-wasting industry, are not his own; he inherits nothing but slavery, he bequeaths nothing but slavery; he himself is the product of slave-breeding industry, a marketable and hereditable commodity. Is this doing unto others as we would have them do unto us? The ties of domestic affections, the covenant of nature which binds to each other husband and wife, parent and child, brother and sister, are acknowledged by public opinion, by the enlightened sentiment of mankind as the highest incentives to individual industry, the richest source of social enjoyment, the main support of order, mutual good will, and improvement in society. The voice of nature and of reason has sanctioned the privacy of domestic life, and has placed the law of the land like a cherub with a flaming sword before the garden of life. But the law of the land which declares the house of the white man his 'castle,'

and guards it against the threats of intruders by imprisonment and death,—the same law, like a faithless sentinel, admits to the unguarded dwelling of the colored man, every selfish and brutal passion, if it bears the color of legalized oppression. \* \* Resistance against violence, the natural right of self-defence, the right of the husband and the father to protect the virtue of his wife and child—if it be exercised by the colored man against the white, is deemed worthy of death. \* \* The simple art of reading, which enables every one to appropriate to himself what other men have done for the elevation and happiness of mankind, is withheld from the slave. The law in some parts of our country threatens death, even to the master himself, who should persist in teaching his slave to read. The safety of the slave state is thought to require this prohibition; the knowledge of the alphabet might enable the slave to find out from the Declaration of American Independence, and from the word of God, that, by Divine right, and by the fundamental law of this country, every man is a freeman. \* \* All civil and political power is in the hands of the white man,—the colored man has none. He is compelled to live under rulers in whose election he has no voice—under laws in whose enactment he is permitted to take no part—and under the verdict and judgment of courts which are constituted wholly by others, and where he is not allowed to defend himself by his own oath, or that of those of his own color. \* \* The only case of importance, in which the law acknowledges a crime committed against a slave as a crime, and threatens punishment to the offender, the case of murder, affords but feeble protection to the life of the slave. The law enables the master to free himself from punishment by shewing that the slave came to his death in consequence of moderate castigation. Nay, the law secures the offender in almost every case of offence committed by a white against a colored man, by *rejecting black testimony against white crime.*"

The abolitionists insist upon the duty of immediate, unconditional emancipation,—simply because they believe the slave is a man, and therefore has the natural and inalienable rights of a man from the first moment of his existence to the last; and therefore slavery, or property in man, being a practical denial of all the natural rights of man is absolutely wrong. The abolitionists believe in the duty of immediate and unconditional emancipation, because of the immediate and unconditional right of the slave to liberty.

Of the efforts that have been made to vindicate slavery from the word of God we shall say nothing. Such attempts appear

to us like endeavoring to reason away reason. "Is it not amazing," writes Patrick Henry, "that at a time when the rights of humanity are defined and understood with precision, in a country, above all others, fond of liberty, that in such an age, and such a country, we find men professing a religion the most humane, mild, gentle, and generous, adopting a principle as repugnant to humanity, as it is inconsistent with the Bible, and destructive to liberty?"

Slavery has also been represented as an ordinance of Providence, because if not permitted by Providence it could not have been established. On the same ground, falsehood, theft, and murder must be held to be divine institutions,—if everything is to be considered as ordained, which is not rendered impossible, but is left to human free agency, to be accounted for eventually before the judgment-seat of God. More particularly when slave property has been acquired not by piracy, or purchase, but by *inheritance*, it is often represented as providential,—as if the laws of hereditary transmission were not ordinances of men; or as if any one was forced to accept an inheritance. If the law of the land calls a man to the inheritance of what cannot be the property of any man, it is not a necessity, but a temptation; and "let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God."

But what shall a slaveholder do, though convinced of his duty to liberate his slaves, if the laws of the state in which he resides forbid emancipation? This difficulty cannot appear insuperable to a true sense of duty, when there is no law that forbids taking the slaves out of the state, and thus freeing them.

It is said that the individual slaveholder is not accountable for the existence of slavery, as it is authorized by the state; and that the present generation is not accountable, because it was entailed upon them by their ancestors, upon whom the curse was fastened by their British rulers. This is the doctrine of the Original Sin, and consequent native depravity, brought out in politics, to get rid of actual, individual responsibility. Since it is at all times in the power of the majority of the citizens to alter the law of the state, or its constitution, the existence of slavery proves that the majority *wills* it; and no individual citizen is free from guilt unless he has done all that lies in him to act out these words of George Washington: "There is not a man living, who wishes more sincerely than I

do, to see a plan adopted for the abolition of it [slavery]; but there is only one proper and effectual mode by which it can be accomplished, and that is, by the legislative authority; and this, as far as my suffrage will go, shall not be wanting."

Many other objections to the final design of the abolitionists, which were first used in England to prevent the emancipation of the British West Indies, and which have since been repeated, almost literally, in this country, are becoming obsolete, since the results of that great act have shown that the faith of the philanthropist, grounded on the moral nature of man, and the teachings of political economy, is not a delusion. No one, hardly, at this time, expects to anticipate the honor of a prophet by predicting that if the slaveholders should give freedom to those from whom they have hitherto withheld it, the freedmen would not fail to prove their gratitude by taking the lives of those who have conferred on them the greatest good of life; or that they would want to run away from liberty as they now do from servitude. Experience has also shown, that with the exception of some cases in which relief should, and would be given, the abolition of slavery is a great economical gain to the slaveholder, in consequence of the higher value of real estate, the increase and superior worth of free labor, the uselessness of so many costly means of defence and safety, as well as of expensive provisions to be made for those who are not able to work, and whose support becomes the duty of their nearest relations, where slavery does not interfere between man and his first and most sacred obligations. The safety, and the economical, as well as moral advantages, which have resulted from emancipation, and more particularly from immediate emancipation in the British West Indies, have been faithfully laid before us by the work of J. A. Thome, and J. H. Kimball, entitled, *Emancipation in the West Indies*. The importance of this work has been justly set forth by the Rev. Dr. W. E. Channing in an article in the *Christian Register*. He says, "No man without reading it should undertake to pass judgment on Emancipation. Many well disposed people, both at the North and South, are possessed with vague fears of massacre and universal misrule, as the consequences of emancipation. Such ought to inquire into the cause of their alarm. They are bound to listen to the voice of *facts*, and such are given in this book. It is a great crime to doom millions of our race to brutal degradation, on the ground of unreasonable fears."

The powerful influence of this work upon public men, whose doubts have been turned by it into faith, is evident from a number of documents, particularly the letters of the governors of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, and Maine, most of which are inserted in Mr. Birney's Correspondence. We quote a few passages from the letter of Governor Everett.

"I have pursued this highly interesting narrative with the greatest satisfaction. The passage of a law, providing for the emancipation of nearly a million of slaves in the British colonies, seemed to afford full opportunity of bringing this momentous question to the decisive test of experience. *If the result proved satisfactory, I have never doubted that it would seal the fate of slavery throughout the civilized world.* As far as the observations of Messrs. Thome and Kimball extended, the result is of the most gratifying character. It appears to place beyond a doubt, that the experiment of immediate emancipation, adopted by the colonial Legislature of Antigua, has fully succeeded in that island; and the plan of apprenticeship in other portions of the West Indies, as well as could have been expected from the obvious inherent vices of that measure. *It has given me new views of the practicability of emancipation.* It has been effected in Antigua, as appears from unquestionable authorities contained in the work of Messrs. Thome and Kimball, not merely *without danger* to the master, but without any sacrifice of his *interest*. I cannot but think that the information collected in the volume will have a powerful effect on public opinion, not only in the northern states, but in the slaveholding states."

The history of the emancipation of Antigua furnishes also an answer to the question which has so often been pressed upon abolitionists, "What is your *plan?*" The answer has uniformly been, "We have no plan to propose." Strike out, at once and forever, from your statute books, the unjust and absurd title of Property in Man, expunge all civil inequalities grounded on difference of color, and you will find that you have yourselves devised, and matured for years, the best plan you would be able and willing to adopt for settling any difficulties, and removing all dangers, that might possibly attend or follow this important change. This well matured plan of your own device is no other than the *law of the land*, which now governs and protects its *white* inhabitants. Let the same law, that now secures both the freedom of the whites and the bondage of the

blacks, assert the equal liberty of all. And surely if the power of the state, backed as it is by the standing army and militia of the United States, is found strong enough to secure the oppression of more than one third of the inhabitants of the slaveholding South, against the most reckless and the most generous impulses of the oppressed, and against the moral influence of the public sentiment of the civilized world,—will not the same power be sufficient to support the law of liberty against those, whose criminal propensities should not be restrained by the monitions of conscience, of gratitude, and ambition, or by the cravings of hunger, which in a well-regulated community lead the most selfish to honest industry? If emancipation proved safe and salutary in the British West Indies, where the average proportion of the colored people to the white is that of seven or eight to one; where the estates are commonly entrusted to managers, whom the absence of the proprietors invests with discretionary power; where the sovereign power, that establishes and secures peace and order, resides in a distant land; and where the great majority of the planters did all they could to oppose the passage, and afterward to defeat the object of the Act of Emancipation,—if under all these unfavorable circumstances the grand experiment of raising men at once from civil nonentity to perfect equality with their oppressors has proved successful in a monarchy, why should it fail in a republic, whose political existence is founded on the acknowledgment of the inalienable rights of man?

The history of the emancipated British West Indies has brought to light the inherent vice of an intermediate state, between freedom and servitude; indeed, of anything like a plan, or contrivance, to establish the relation between the freedmen and their former masters on any other legal foundation, than that which regulates the connexion between the employer and the free laborer. Though none of the disastrous consequences predicted by the opposers of the British act of Emancipation came to pass, yet the official reports of the governors, as well as the observations of Thome and Kimball, prove the superior condition of those islands, in which the Abolition of Slavery was immediate and entire. They show, on the other hand, the great evils growing out of the apprenticeship system, which have at last induced the colonial legislatures to give up, of their own accord, the claims which the law gave to the masters, on the compulsory services of the apprentices, and to proclaim com-

plete liberty. Every act of gradual or eventual emancipation, every transition state between absolute dependence and individual responsibility, only serves to show to the partially free man that his master acknowledges the whole of his rights, while he still withholds a part. It excites discontent in the laborer, and thereby becomes dangerous to the employer.

It is not necessary after this, to speak of the unfitness of the masters in general to educate the slaves ; or of the inadequacy of such an education to fit them for liberty ; or of the obvious inexpediency and danger of placing them, after their present connexion is dissolved, in a situation like that of guardian and ward. There is one circumstance which those, who speak of the necessity of a previous education for liberty, do not seem sufficiently to consider, and which explains the otherwise surprising fact, that in those British Islands in which the emancipation was immediate and entire, the freedmen found at once their natural place in the new order of things, without any previous contrivance or effort. It is obvious that, in the slaveholding states, the slaves alone possess that practical education which fits men to earn their bread ; they are in fact the planters, and the mechanics ; and the only new thing they have to acquire in becoming free is to learn to work for themselves alone, while at present their work supports both themselves and their masters.

That part of education, then, which is most necessary to the slaves in case of immediate emancipation, for physical existence, and economical independence, they already possess. As for the highest branch of education, which raises man in the scale of moral and spiritual being, we know that Christianity in its lowest form, such as existed for centuries in barbarous Europe, is found among the slaves at the South, and generally promoted by the masters. It is that form of religion which induces men to yield implicit faith and obedience to the divine right of kings, and the infallibility of priests, and conscientiously to submit to existing evils as providential arrangements, which, in a more enlightened state of faith and conscience, they would feel bound to remove. This form of a religion which, even in its lowest estate, does not wholly lose the traits of its indwelling divinity, which assuages the private griefs of the oppressed, while it invests oppression with a sacred character, and makes the best elements of human nature the supports and ministers of its

degradation,—this menial piety is common among slaves, and generally tolerated, and even promoted by slaveholders.

This spiritual power which now protects the life of the slaveholder from attempts, which all the threats and blandishments of earthly sovereignty are not sufficient to ward off, will exert also a salutary power over the slave when set at liberty. It will make him a good subject, while he is acquiring the elements of *that* Christianity, which is not attainable in slavery, which forms the good citizen. But surely the fundamental truths of the everlasting gospel were intended for a temple frame, though they may be used advantageously to erect a prison.

After speaking of the real and only object of the Abolitionists, as declared in the constitution of the American Anti-Slavery Society, it is hardly necessary to notice any purposes that have been imputed to them by their opponents. At times, the cry of Amalgamation, and Amalgamationists, has been raised, and reiterated, strange to say, both by the most refined circles of society, and by infuriated mobs. If the cry had been raised by the abolitionists against slaveholders, they might have pointed at the hundreds of thousands of mulattoes, in proof of their reproaches; and they might have appealed to the fact, that where the races are left free to choose for themselves, each will be found, generally, to prefer connexions of the same color. With regard to those, therefore, who join in this outcry against the abolitionists, it seems most charitable to suppose that they know not what they do; for if they did, their indignation would argue a singular opposition to legal, and comparative indifference to illegal, connexions between the two races.

The abolitionists have also been charged, sometimes by each of the two great political parties which divide the country, of making abolitionism the instrument, or allowing themselves to be made the instruments for promoting the party purposes of their opponents. A glance at the names of the members of the different Anti-Slavery Societies, as well as their repeated declarations, must convince every one of the groundlessness of this charge. Mr. Birney observes, "that on a late occasion, two of the local agents of the American Anti-Slavery Society were candidates of their respective political parties, for the office of Secretary of State, for the state of Vermont." With regard to political action, it is the decided unanimous opinion of the members of both political parties that compose the Anti-Slavery Societies, that those objects, to which alone political action ex-

tends, namely, the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, and the Territories of the Union, the abolition of the slave trade between the states, and opposition to the admittance of all slaveholding territories and foreign states to the Union,—are of greater moral importance than any of the different economical and political questions, which form the topics of party contention in the country. The most decided democrats and whigs in the Anti-Slavery ranks have declared their conscientious determination, that if of two party candidates for a political office one is favorable, and the other opposed to the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, the whig will vote for the democratic candidate, and the democrat for the whig, if the candidate of the opposite party entertain correct principles on this most important subject. This mode of proceeding will cause the abolitionists, particularly where the parties are nearly equally divided, alternately to be abused, or courted. Southern statesmen will address themselves as heretofore, now to the poor men in the free states, exciting their jealousies against the rich, and persuading them that "southern slavery is the support of northern liberty;" and now to the rich, showing them that, instead of trying to free the slaves of the South, it is their interest to curtail the political privileges of the free laborers of the North; and these two opposite appeals, though occasionally coming from the same men, will find dupes, selfish and generous dupes, amongst us. But the abolitionists, if true to themselves, will hold their straight forward, independent course, till their work is finished.

III. The *means*, by which the abolitionists propose to carry their object into effect, are indicated by the object itself, and distinctly stated in the constitution of the American, and of each of the affiliated Anti-Slavery Societies. The course, which they are pledged to pursue, implies to a certain extent political, and beyond that, only moral action. Political action is confined to the questions of slavery in the District of Columbia, and the territories of the Union; the internal slave trade, and the admission of slaveholding territories and states into the Union; and it consists in petitioning Congress, and choosing public officers with a view to the abolition of slavery, as far as the jurisdiction of Congress extends.

The course of moral action laid out by the abolitionists is coextensive with the existence of servitude, and consists in

"arguments addressed to the understandings and consciences" of the slaveholders. For this purpose, they make use of the constitutional liberty of speech, and the press, and holding public assemblies; and in order to bring all the talent and energy within their reach to work together for the same end, they form societies, and raise funds for the support of lecturers and publications.

In this enumeration of means, it would be difficult to point out anything either unconstitutional or immoral. But the abolitionists have been accused of exciting the slaves to insurrection. They have challenged the proof of this assertion, and none has ever been attempted. Their constitution distinctly says, "This society will never, in any way, countenance the oppressed in vindicating their rights by resorting to physical force." The same principle has been expressed and insisted upon, in all their publications and by all their lecturers. To avoid all appearance of evil, they have not only not sent any of their publications to slaves in any part of the country, but not even to colored freemen south of the city of Washington; but solely to such among the slaveholders, as from their high standing in society must prevent all suspicion of any other than honest endeavors to induce the masters of their own accord to liberate their slaves. This charge against the abolitionists is brought forward only by the most ignorant, or indifferent with regard to truth; and is not believed by any intelligent man, either at the South or North. We quote the words of General Duff Greene in the Southern Review. "We are of those who believe the South has nothing to fear from a servile war. We do not believe that the abolitionists intend, nor could they, if they would, excite the slaves to insurrection. The danger of this is remote. We believe, that we have most to fear from the organized action upon the consciences and fears of slaveholders themselves. It is only by alarming the consciences of the weak and feeble, and diffusing among our own people a morbid sensibility on the question of slavery, that the abolitionists can accomplish their object." — "It is not," says Mr. Calhoun, "that we expect the abolitionists will resort to arms, will commence a crusade to deliver our slaves by force. Let me tell our friends of the South who differ from us, that the war, which the abolitionists wage against us, is of a very different character, and far more effective. It is waged not against our lives, but our character." A very large portion of abolitionists

are conscientious professors of what are termed ultra peace principles; disapproving of the use of physical force even for the purpose of personal and national self-defence. These would separate themselves, or insist on the exclusion of others from the society, in case of the slightest deviation from the peace pledge with regard to the liberation of the slaves.

In terms as explicit as those in which they condemn the use of physical force, the abolitionists disclaim all intention of political interference with slavery, as it exists in the slaveholding states. The only mode of political interference, that could be thought of, would be an attempt to abolish slavery in the slave states by an act of Congress. The second article of the constitution of the American Anti-Slavery Society says, "While it [this society] admits that each state, in which slavery exists, has, by the constitution of the United States, the exclusive right to *legislate* in regard to its abolition in said state, it shall aim to convince all our fellow-citizens, by arguments," &c. The only objects of political action, proposed by the Anti-Slavery Societies, have been already enumerated, and no attempt on their part to go beyond them has ever been made. They claim the right of political action with regard to the District of Columbia, on the *same ground* on which they disclaim all political interference with the laws of the sovereign states. Is it right, then, to accuse them beforehand of an abandonment of their constitutional ground, in case they should succeed in effecting, by constitutional means, the abolition of slavery in the District? As for the declaration lately made, "that to attempt to abolish slavery in the District, *as an intermediate step* to abolishing it in the states themselves, by the federal government, or the non-slaveholding states, or their citizens, would be manifestly liable to all the objections to which a direct attempt to abolish it in the states themselves would be," — it would be difficult to find the abolitionist that would not be willing to sign this declaration as an explicit disclaimer of all intentions of legislating for the District, *with a view to legislate for the states*.

It is for the existence of slavery, so far only as it is under the constitutional control of Congress, that the whole country, all its citizens, are directly responsible. It is for the extinction of slavery on this constitutional ground, that an ever increasing number of petitioners is seeking the ear of Congress at every session. It is true these petitions are grounded not on any local interests, but on the conviction of the intrinsic injustice of

slavery ; and it certainly is the sincere desire of the petitioners, that the reasons which they assign, as well as the wished for accomplishment of their entreaty, should now or hereafter exert such a moral influence on the citizens of the slave states, as to induce them to use their sovereign power for its only legitimate object, that is, the establishment of universal justice. But the thought of political interference with the legislative action of the states is as foreign to the abolitionists of the North, as it was to the philanthropists of England, when they succeeded by the act of Parliament to put an end to West India slavery,—although they certainly hoped that the influence of their example would not be lost on the United States.

With regard to the District of Columbia, the words of the constitution, giving to Congress "power to exercise exclusive legislation, in all cases whatsoever, over such District," are so explicit, that until of late no doubts have been expressed, either by southern or northern statesmen, as to the right of the Federal Government to abolish slavery within the ten miles square. It is only lately, since petitions for this object began to multiply, that some southern politicians, misguided by fear, have endeavored to represent slavery in the District of Columbia, as standing on the same ground with slavery in the states. But this attempt at identifying a subject, over which Congress has exclusive jurisdiction, with one over which it has no jurisdiction whatever, is so palpable a misconception, and so sadly inconsistent with the jealous vindication of State Rights, that the new doctrine seems to have produced but a very limited or transient impression. The constitutional right being conceded, it has been said, Congress ought not to exercise it, for various reasons. One is, that the people of the District have not petitioned for or given their consent to the abolition of slavery. But the constitution gives to the citizens of the District no more right to interfere with the legislation of Congress, than to the slaves. And the abolitionists look upon the slaves as being part of the people, as well as their masters ; and as they are not allowed to petition for themselves, the constituents of Congress are responsible for their being deprived of their natural rights.

It is said also, that although the original act, by which Maryland and Virginia ceded this District to the United States, was unconditional ; yet if they had imagined that the power which they transferred would be used to abolish slavery there, before they themselves had done the same within their own bounda-

ries, they would not have consented to an unconditional cession. But every one, who is acquainted with the history of this transaction, knows that it was the great object of the general government in acquiring this territory, to secure for the seat of government a spot wholly withdrawn from the control of any local power, and wholly subjected to that of Congress. This object was known to those who ceded the territory. It is moreover not consistent with the history of the time, to assert that the abolition of slavery in the District is so novel a thought, that it could not be supposed to have entered the minds of the parties to that act of cession. Attempts at abolishing slavery had been made in the legislature of Virginia before that time; and the most distinguished statesmen, both of Virginia and Maryland, had publicly expressed the strongest desire to "begin the redress of this enormity," as Mr. Jefferson termed it. The same intention was evinced in the ordinance for the government of the great territory northwest of the Ohio, which was passed in 1787, by the unanimous voice of all the states present at its passage, namely, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Delaware, *Virginia*, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia. This ordinance, according to the preamble, was intended "for extending the fundamental principles of civil and religious liberty; to fix and establish those principles as the basis of all laws, constitutions, and governments, which forever hereafter shall be formed in said territory." The sixth article declares, that "there shall neither be slavery, nor involuntary servitude in the said territory, otherwise than for the punishment of crimes." The six fundamental articles of this ordinance still form the constitutional basis of the territorial governments of the United States; and being passed by a majority of slave states, of which Virginia was one, before the cession of the District of Columbia, it does not seem so very improbable, that the possibility of an attempt to abolish slavery there should have presented itself to those who made the cession, particularly as the District bears to the general government essentially the same relation as the territories of the Union. Still more, in 1785 the first Anti-Slavery Society had been organized in the city of New York, under the presidency of John Jay; and in the year 1789 the Pennsylvania Society "for promoting the Abolition of Slavery" was formed, of which Dr. Franklin was President, and Dr. Rush, Secretary. In 1790, the year of the cession of the District, a memorial of the Pennsylvania Society,

signed by Dr. Franklin as its President, was addressed to the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States. The memorialists say, that "they have observed with real satisfaction, that many important and salutary powers are vested in you for promoting the welfare and securing the blessings of liberty to the people of the United States; and they conceive that these blessings ought rightfully to be administered without distinction of color," &c., they entreat Congress "to countenance the restoration of liberty to those unhappy men, who alone in this land of freedom are degraded into perpetual bondage," &c., "and that you will step to the very verge of the power vested in you for discouraging every species of traffic in the persons of our fellow-men." About the same time, proceeding from the North to the borders of Virginia and Maryland, state after state abolished slavery, on the ground of its being contrary to the rights of man as acknowledged in the Declaration of Independence, and subsequently in the constitutions of the different states; and the representatives of these states, if true to their constituents, must be expected to carry the same sentiments to Congress, upon which the constitution conferred unlimited sovereignty over whatever district might by the cession of particular states be made the seat of government. Under these circumstances, and while the desire of "removing this inconsistency from the character of the American people," as it is expressed in Dr. Franklin's memorial, was strong throughout the country, would it have been considered as taking an unfair advantage, if the very first Congress after the cession had issued a prohibition of slavery in the District? The idea, then, that Congress, by cleansing its own premises from this moral and political nuisance, would offend against the spirit of the act of cession, or violate an implied faith, is altogether groundless; and the demand, that Congress should wait for Virginia and Maryland to precede them in the work of emancipation, seems as unreasonable as it would be to assert that, if the laws of those states sanctioned polygamy or duelling, Congress ought not to forbid these crimes any sooner than they would have been prohibited, if the District had remained part of Virginia and Maryland. And if these states think their peculiar institutions safe, with a border country of more than four hundred miles on the free states of Pennsylvania and Ohio, it is hardly probable that they would be endangered by the liberation of an enclosure of ten miles square, under the immediate inspection and control of the federal government.

We have dwelt longer on the subject of the abolition of slavery in the District, because this is the point upon which all political action, both of individuals, and of those northern legislatures, who have expressed their sense of the desirableness of this measure, are concentrated. A more elaborate and satisfactory investigation of this subject may be found in a series of letters, by *Wythe*, (T. D. Weld) on the Power of Congress over the District of Columbia.

The sphere of *moral* action, to which the abolitionists have devoted their efforts, embraces the slaveholding states, as well as those parts of the country which are exclusively within the reach of their political privileges. It is by appeals to the conscience, the sense of honor and of shame, the feelings of humanity, the religious principle, and the enlightened self-interest of the slaveholders, that the abolitionists hope to induce them of their own accord to do justice to their enslaved brethren. They look upon this as an enterprise in which all who are engaged in works of benevolence of any kind ought to unite. For whether they be engaged in labors for the poor,—who is so poor as the slave who may gain thousands, but cannot own anything, not even the very faculties and energies by which he gains them; or in promoting knowledge and education,—who is so much in want of information as the slave, whom the law makes it a crime to instruct; or in missions to the heathen,—who is there more in need of gospel light than the heathen of our own land, whom the law, made by Christians, deprives of the inestimable privilege to read and search the Scriptures for themselves?

The Anti-Slavery Society is sending out its publications to southern slaveholders; and many a conscience has been touched, and many have been induced, by these *lawful* means of *interference*, to give up their own slaves, and to dispose their fellow-citizens to promote the removal of this great evil. At the same time they are sending out publications and lecturers through the free states, to combat the prejudice against color, which strengthens the principle of slavery at the South, while it keeps the colored people of the North in a servile condition. They count upon all the various ties, by which the two halves of our country are connected, as so many avenues to the conscience, the reason, and the interests of the slaveholder. They believe that slavery would soon cease to exist, if the people of the free states were thoroughly convinced of the sinfulness of slavery, (not in the abstract, but as it exists by law,) and of their own duty as Christians to com-

municate the blessings they possess to those who are deprived of them. Slavery would come to an end, if those individuals who are connected with Southerners by kindred, or marriage, instead of allowing these connexions to make them apologists, should see in them the means of becoming the benefactors of their friends, by inducing them to free themselves from the greatest enemy to private virtue and domestic happiness ; if the different denominations of Christians would exert themselves to spread and establish everywhere the great principle of universal brotherhood, for which the Savior laid down his life ; if the statesman would use his influence in Congress, and with his political friends out of Congress, to put an end to slavery, which alone endangers the Union ; if the merchant and the manufacturer would make use of their business connexions to open the eyes of their southern customers to the superior economy of free labor. It is for this reason that the Anti-Slavery Society sends forth publications and lecturers all over the free States, to induce all classes of men to avail themselves of their various friendly relations with the slaveholding South, to prove themselves the best friends both of the slave and the slaveholder, by spreading the peaceful and beneficent doctrine of voluntary emancipation.

One objection to this mode of proceeding is thus mentioned by Mr. Birney. "It has been said, that the slaveholders of the South will not yield, nor hearken to the influence of truth on this subject. We believe it not ; nor give we entertainment to the slander that such an unworthy defence of them implies. We believe them *men*, that they have understandings that arguments will convince, consciences to which the appeals of justice and mercy will not be made in vain. If our principles be true, our arguments right, if slaveholders be men, and God have not delivered over our guilty country to the retributions of the oppressor, not only the *stranger* but the *native*, our success is certain."

Another objection is noticed in the Third Annual Report of the New England Anti-Slavery Society, in these words. "Abolitionists are often charged with using language unjustifiably harsh, when they speak of holding slaves as being a sin or crime. But it should be recollect that, in so doing, we are not measuring the comparative guilt of individual slave-owners, but merely declaring our opinion of the abstract moral quality of their acts. Circumstances of education and pre-

vailing custom may make slaveholding a smaller offence in one man than in another, who sees his duty more clearly. But the act of holding a human being as property is as clearly a violation of his rights, as to rob or murder him. Our object in using such language is to awaken the guilty to a sense of their transgressions."

One of the most affecting instances of this power of custom over the simplest feelings of humanity may be found in a letter of General William Eaton, which, for its eminent fitness to awaken conscientious self-examination, we will here insert. General Eaton, in a letter to his wife, speaks thus of nine hundred and twenty Sardinians, who had been captured and made slaves by the Tunisians.

" Many have died of grief, and the others linger out a life less tolerable than death. Alas,—remorse seizes my whole soul when I reflect, that this is indeed but a copy of the very barbarity which my eyes have seen in my own native country. And yet we boast of liberty, and national justice. How frequently in the southern states of my own country, have I seen weeping mothers leading the guiltless infant to the sales with as deep anguish as if they led them to the slaughter, and yet felt my bosom tranquil in the view of these aggressions on defenceless humanity. But when I see the same enormities practised upon beings whose complexions and blood claim kindred with my own, I curse the perpetrators, and weep over the wretched victims of their rapacity. Indeed, truth and justice demand from me the confession, that the Christian slaves among the barbarians of Africa are treated with more humanity than the African slaves among professing Christians of civilized America ; and yet here sensibility bleeds at every pore for the wretches whom fate has doomed to slavery."

It is to be regretted that in the controversy between abolitionists and anti-abolitionists the Christian precept, to " speak the truth in love," has often been violated. Vehement and abusive language has been used on both sides. But we rejoice to notice a progress toward good taste, and a more respectful and courteous course of debate ; and it is for this, among other reasons, that we dwell with peculiar satisfaction on the Correspondence between Mr. Elmore and Mr. Birney, as being free from all insulting and vituperative language, without any abatement of earnestness and decision. But any case of abuse of the liberty of the press on this subject, as on every other,

comes under the general rule, that for insult and slander every one is amenable to the law; while those cases of which the law does not take cognizance are left to the correcting hand of free discussion. But to say that, by the manner in which the subject of slavery had been discussed at the North, the constitutional liberty of speech and of the press had been violated, without specifying cases or defining the constitutional limits of this liberty, is a vague assertion. In a free country, no institution can claim exemption from being made the object of unbounded praise or censure; it is only the rights of individuals, and not their passions or threats, that ought to set limits to liberty. The violent language, made use of in this controversy by some individuals and in some instances, is highly reprehensible; but not more so than that which we meet with in most of the newspapers of the two great political parties, in many theological disputes, and debates on temperance and other subjects of reform. It is time that Christians should awake to their duty to rebuke vituperation and slander wherever they find utterance; and in cases of gross abuse, for which the law offers redress, those who are aggrieved would often promote the cause of truth by recourse to the law. But to denounce free discussion is generally the proof of conscious wrong, or want of faith in the truth; and to attempt to stifle it by penal enactments, or put it down by Lynch law, is the last resort of despairing tyranny. There is nothing perhaps that has so palpably exposed the weakness of the slaveholder's position as the ill-advised and abortive attempts of southern legislatures to induce the governments of the free states to arrest the anti-slavery movement, by encroachments upon the right of free discussion. And nothing has been so effectual to spread abolition principles, as the spirit of violence that has destroyed printing presses, broken up peaceful assemblies, ruined churches, fired Pennsylvania Hall, persecuted lecturers, murdered Lovejoy,—for no other purpose than that of putting down free discussion. There is something hopeful, after all, in the fact, that when men are bent on deeds of reckless violence, the hands are found more courageous than the ears. When the Jews killed Stephen, it is mentioned that they "stopped their ears" before they ran upon and stoned him.

There are certain signs of the times which are interpreted differently by abolitionists, and their opponents. Before the slavery question was agitated in our country, slavery was gen-

erally acknowledged both by southern statesmen and theologians, and church assemblies, as a great social evil, which might be mitigated, but must be allowed to exist for fear of the consequences. In recent publications of eminent theologians, and in resolutions of ecclesiastical assemblies, the ground is taken "that the holding of slaves, so far from being a sin in the sight of God, is nowhere condemned in his holy word; that it is in accordance with the example, or consistent with the precepts, of patriarchs, prophets, and apostles."\* The same change of sentiment was implied in the words of the senator from South Carolina, when he declared, that "many in the South once believed that slavery was a moral and political evil; that folly and delusion are gone. We see it now in its true light, and regard it as the most safe and stable basis for free institutions in the world." Now we do not believe that the sound sense and right feeling of the southern people have undergone such a change; we take it to be confined to the most conspicuous champions of the cause. But that these should have changed their ground so as to reduce the whole controversy to one of principle only, the abolitionists consider a great gain. For it applies to the statesmen, as well as the southern church, what Mr. Birney says of the recent pro-slavery professions of the latter. "To drive the slaveholding church and its members from the equivocal, the neutral position, from which they had so long successfully defended slavery,—to compel them to elevate their practice to an even height with their avowed principles, or to degrade their principles to the level of their practice, was a preliminary, necessary in the view of abolitionists, either for bringing that part of the church into the common action against slavery, or as a ground for treating it as confederate with oppressors."

It has been said that individuals have undoubtedly a right to express their thoughts and feelings freely on the subject of slavery; but that abolitionists have no right to spread over the country a host of affiliated societies, and keep up a system of agitation. Now with regard to the *right* in question it is sufficient to remark, that the right of forming associations extends just as far as that of individual action. Whatever object the individual has a right to pursue by his single exertions, he is justified in attempting to accomplish by associate effort. The

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\* The Charleston (S. C.) Union Presbytery.

only question then remains, whether the object of emancipation is more likely to be effected in one way, or the other. Now the great body of abolitionists are persuaded that this philanthropic enterprise, which recommends itself to the simplest feelings of justice and compassion in the child, as truly as to the benevolent wisdom of the man, requires a combination and concentration of all the intelligence and goodness that exists amongst us ; and that but for the constant agitation of this subject the public sentiment would relapse into the same torpor from which, but for the anti-slavery societies, it would never have awaked,—unless it be by the horrors of a servile war, which they are striving to avert. It is a fact, that, among those engaged in this cause of simple humanity, all distinctions of sect and party are merged ; that there is as little of the mere machinery of associated action as possible ; that those, who are agreed on the fundamental principles laid down in the constitution of the Society, do not hesitate to express their own individual opinions, without fear of not being thought orthodox by their associates, or of presenting to the public the appearance of division in the camp ; and that no individual member thinks himself, or is thought to be, responsible for any resolutions passed by the majority, any farther than they seem to him consistent with the constitution.

We are well aware of the dangers that beset all associations ; and are thankful to those who have pointed them out. But with regard to that which is perhaps the greatest, the danger of cramping individual talent and energy, there is as little of it in the Anti-Slavery Society, as in any existing association. And then it ought not to be overlooked, that where a cause is carried on only by individual effort, men of uncommon talents or pretensions alone will bring forward their ideas, without the aid of free and various consultation ; while an association brings into action the moderate or diffident powers of many, who would otherwise have remained silent and inactive.

We have offered some considerations in defence of the object and the means pursued by the abolitionists. We have said nothing of the "danger of dissolving the Union," because we do not believe it in danger. The only cause that creates in this country a radical opposition of principle and interest, the only real cause of disunion, is Slavery. The threats of the South are made fearful only by the fears of the North ; for it must be evident to every reflecting man, that, if it were but for

the purpose of preserving the institution of slavery, the South cannot dissolve the Union.

We would gladly have added some words of praise and gratitude to those who have aided this cause by their single efforts, without being members of an Anti-Slavery Society. If it be true, that those who are associated for this purpose have suffered in the estimation of others from the fact, that some of the most eminent friends of freedom have not joined the Society, this should not prevent the former from appreciating the noble exertions of the latter. We wished to have paid some adequate tribute to what has been done for the cause of the enslaved, more particularly by the writings of Dr. William E. Channing, and Miss Martineau. But we forbear. This only would we say. We respect, we admire the man and the woman who *deserve* their extraordinary popularity; we venerate them for being ready to sacrifice it in defence of *unpopular truth*.

With regard to other points included in the inquiries of Mr. Elmore, we refer the reader to the answers of Mr. Birney. In conclusion, we would offer to the people of the free States, in behalf of the abolitionists, this consideration. If the Chairman of the Committee of the Southern Delegation in Congress did not think it derogatory to himself to inquire of their antagonists, in respectful terms, what this new doctrine is,—may we not be allowed to hope that here at the North, among their neighbors, kindred, and friends, the abolitionists may find a patient and respectful hearing, and kind and courteous treatment?

C. F.

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#### ART. VII.—GOOD SENSE AND ELOQUENCE.

THE nature, the connexion, the importance, the conditions of these two modes of thought and expression are not easy to be fully understood. The general distinction between them is obvious. Good sense addresses the judgment; Eloquence the feelings also. Good sense enlightens; Eloquence also moves. When listening to the one, you are pleased with its faithfulness; your commendation is that “the thing is just so;” truth, which you had per-

ceived but vaguely or partially, is now exhibited complete and marked ; you wonder you had not seen it as plainly before ; you are sure that if you knew how to write so well, you would have said precisely the same thing. The understanding is never called to surrender itself to the conduct of the heart, but continually judges and commends, with calmness, but with satisfaction. When listening to Eloquence, on the other hand, the understanding is made to minister to the active powers ; the mind is not left at leisure to affirm the truth of what is said, but is absorbed in contemplation and high purposes ; "what shall I do ?" you exclaim ; you wonder that you have been so remiss and blind, and are kindled with a new admiration, or love, of the vast and the beautiful. Good sense in short presents things truly ; Eloquence vividly. Good sense instructs ; Eloquence affects.

Now there is nothing inconsistent in these two modes of mental action. When, indeed, we characterize a writer or speaker as one of strong sense, we mean to exclude higher qualities. Thus, John Foster, Paley, Tacitus are distinguished for their good sense, for their clear and strong judgment ; and we should give neither of these the praise of eloquence. Yet there is nothing in their principles of composition condemnatory of it. To their good qualities a glowing copiousness, a fervid energy might be added, without detracting at all from their merit of judiciousness. It is very true that examples of a strong simultaneous and at the same time harmonious action of the judgment, imagination, and heart, are very rare. The affections are apt to cloud the truth which they adorn. But this is only because the affections are not true to nature. Rightly used, the heart helps the understanding, and receives excitement in return.

But while Eloquence is perfectly consistent with good sense, it is not confined to the same limits. Good sense concerns itself with that alone which it can define ; and of course is conversant only with what is subject to its close observation. But the mind, excited by the imagination, cannot content itself with that clearly intelligible truth which lies nigh at hand, but continually aspires, and looks up into the dim and undiscovered distance. Such is the law of the human mind. We are not made to occupy ourselves always with learning better what we have learned once already ; but to exercise our faculties to the very limits of their tether, looking for new realities among the

appearances of the spiritual horizon, and soaring so as to extend that horizon itself. There are some men who are very impatient of these flights ; who think that all writing and speaking is valuable only so far as it is distinct and scrupulous ; who call everything nonsense, which is not exact sense. A man, glowing with sublime visions, discourses to them on what he sees, or thinks he sees, of the unexplored magnificence of the upper heaven of thought ; and they do not suffer themselves to be moved. They receive only what appears to them to be accurate. "Tell us precisely what you mean by this. How is this expression of yours to be reconciled with that other ? Make your ideas distinct to us." Thus they say, and any irreconcilable inconsistency, much more a confession on the speaker's part, that he does not know exactly what he means himself, (a confession which a man at once aspiring and sincere, will sometimes be called to make,) stamps the whole as worthless in the minds of these censors. Now is not this very narrow ? Are any discoveries to be hoped for, if we limit our view to that clear field which lies immediately about us ? Is not every truth, like every outward object, indistinct in proportion to its elevation ? And is it not for the noble mind frequently to turn away from those accessible objects, which good sense pleases itself with illustrating, to the dim, and often obscured, but changeless orb of heaven ? Above all, the religious thinker, the true philosopher, is impatient of the bonds of logic. He knows that the highest objects of thought are those, the connexion of which with acknowledged truth is not yet clear. He knows that he can feel what he cannot prove. He spurns all bounds but those of his own nature ; and is fond of sending his raised spirits up into the illimitable realms of space. And why scout such a man, because his vision is sometimes dim ? It is none the less a new planet that he has discovered ; because he is not able as yet to tell its diameter, or the number of its satellites. He sees a new star in the sky ; and what he sees he tells. Let him be honored as a discoverer. But the worst of it is, that superiority and praise straightway beget conceit ; the eye is obscured by vanity ; and the next time that our philosopher announces a discovery to the world, the new star will, as likely as not, turn out to be only a glittering particle of earthy matter, which has been raised into his atmosphere by the shuffling of his own self-congratulation. Such an error may fairly amuse us. But it is better to be sometimes mistaken than to be always dull.

The field of eloquence then is wider than that of good sense, for the simple reason that the mind may be excited by that which it does not comprehend. And yet within the sphere of clear understanding, eloquence should always be faithful to judgment; for we are always more moved by what we understand, than by what we do not. Strong sense is often the chief characteristic of eloquence; and this is the source of the power of several of our most persuasive legislative orators. Notwithstanding this, however, eloquence may be very great without its faithful ally. Who will deny the consummate eloquence of Rousseau for instance; and yet who would allow him the praise of good sense? Perpetually offending against the common sense of men, yet continually surprising you with his shrewd observations on society, his sentiments corrupted by his own vices, and his judgment misled by regarding his idiosyncracies as the universal attributes of humanity, accommodating his theories to an impossible state, which is nevertheless assumed as real, but, on the other hand, with a boundless capacity for abstract truth, a sincere love of virtue, and an enthusiastic faith, — false to the world, yet true to his own convictions, the most unsafe of writers, and requiring to be watched with an indefatigable jealousy, he is so eloquently wrong, when right so genial and possessed, that while few authors offer so much instruction, or so move the heart, few can read him without danger, none profit by him without fatigue.

The secret of his power was, as he told the Jesuit priest, that he said what he thought. His writings are pervaded by a deep sincerity. If he misled others, he first thoroughly deceived himself. He had the spirit of truth; though he was so often betrayed into error. Good sense is not essential to eloquence; but this spirit of truth is. With sincere enthusiasm one may be eloquent in a bad cause. And yet, can eloquence exist *in the highest degree* without good sense? Does not error enfeeble as well as distort the mind? Does it not disturb the harmony of the faculties; cause the sympathies of the soul to contradict and counteract one another; and so produce a feverish excitement, which finds relief in returning at last even to judicious dulness? One sometimes gladly escapes from the eloquent flood of Rousseau or Byron to the terra firma of the simplest common sense. And, still more, does not the perception of any fundamental mistake in a writer or speaker immediately check the influence of his address? Is not our admiration of

Massillon, for instance, continually arrested by our dissent from his gloomy theology ; and does not his great mind move with far less power, from being shackled with doctrines which good sense condemns ? It would appear so. Good sense is essential to the highest eloquence ; and sincerity, temporary sincerity at least, to any genuine eloquence at all.

It is very pleasing to observe how faithful human nature is to its guides. You will sometimes see a speaker exerting all the powers of his constitution under the impulse of a selfish zeal, roaring with an unmeasured capacity of lungs, while his audience remain entirely unaffected, or it may be, asleep ; and then a true-hearted man will perhaps rise, and with a voice trembling from physical weakness, and scarcely audible, and a frame hardly strong enough to support itself, will move the very depths of the soul, tears will gather even on the hardened cheek, and the indifferent be roused to anxious thought. The difference between two such speakers every assembly appreciates. They perceive that it is the difference between something and nothing. The heart remains unmoved by mere physical exertion. I have seen a Franciscan monk in an Italian pulpit, spending the extreme energy of his body, striding to and fro like a lion in a cage, grasping the crucifix, embracing it, tearing his hair, foaming at the mouth, pale, trembling, his eyes distorted like a maniac's, and his auditors meanwhile occupied with asking alms of the strangers who were among them. They were only chilled by the cataract of his zeal. His speech was nought, because he was not moved by the Holy Spirit.

This bombastic style of speaking is heard mostly from ambitious imitators of distinguished orators. Thus many of the followers of Whitefield, without any of the self-sacrifice and faith which kindled such a flame within his breast, yet bent on possessing his power even without his merit, have substituted violence for energy, and extravagance for zeal, looking to their bodies for inspiration, and to language for material ; not urged by the truth, but, like the horses of the Roman carnival, spurred into mad speed by their own exertions. An audience immediately perceives that this is all false fire. Ambitious worldliness never has received, nor ever will receive, the rewards of faith.

But noisy declamation is an excess very infrequent among us. We run into opposite follies. A large portion of our public speakers content themselves with an unexcited and unexciting judiciousness. Perhaps to a wise observer this would seem

to be peculiarly the case with the Unitarian pulpit. If it be so, the peculiarity is to be accounted for from the fact, that our chief business for a period has been to deny and to examine, to refute with calmness what was maintained with passion, and to reëstablish Reason on the throne from which she had been expelled.. But very unfortunately, Reason seems to have been confounded with reasoning ; and some of our most conscientious ministers have become jealous of everything but argument. Stirring appeals to the imagination and the heart seem to them out of place, or at least unnecessary. Their home, their friends, their country, their freedom, their lives,—these they would defend in extremity with passionate attachment. But God and Jesus, the principles of piety and of morals, though not only in danger, but violently assailed, the spiritual lives of their friends actually periled, they hold it best to defend with unexcited self-possession.

Is it a mere superficial evil that we oppose ? Is not the very heart diseased ? Are not the very affections, principles, faith, hopes of the people unchristian and worldly ? Does not vice spread like the plague ? Is not the public eye blind to the greatest realities ? Does not every-day life, do not the public prints, manifest a hearty alienation from those principles which we preach ? If so, what then is going to work the radical reform, which, now as well as in the days of the apostles, is the end and aim of gospel preaching ? Will good sense do it ? Never. “ You have no hold on the passions but by the passions.”\* And if we are to overcome the passionate attachment which men have to the silly trifles of this showy world, it can only be by infusing into them, by means of an eloquent transmission from our own hearts, a passionate love of God and of virtue.

G. F. S.

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\* “ On n’ a de prise sur les passions que par les passions.” — *Rousseau.*

## NOTICES AND INTELLIGENCE.

*A History of the Presbyterian and General Baptist Churches in the West of England ; with Memoirs of some of their Pastors.* By JEROM MURCH, Minister of Trim Street Chapel, Bath. London : J. Mardon, Farringdon Street. 1835. 8vo. pp. 579. — Whoever wishes to obtain a correct idea of the history, principles, and prospects of English Unitarians, may safely refer to this volume, which, though it confines its notices to the Unitarian societies in the West of England only, is so minute and careful in these, that better means are furnished in it of judging of the character of the whole body, than in any other volume with which we are acquainted. It is also filled with that curious interest which belongs to antiquarian research and biographical anecdote. The history of the churches is commenced at their several fountains, which, as is well known, are generally in the old field of Presbyterianism, and, as it is followed down, is accompanied by notices of men who have played a part, more or less distinguished, in their day and generation. As we turn the pages of this book, we meet with the familiar and respected names of Toulmin, Towgood, James Peirce of Exeter, Merivale, Estlin, Butcher, Bretland, Kenrick, John Jones, Jervis, Carpenter, besides others, who though less known, deserve remembrance. We also meet with names of more domestic sound ; names of those whose ministerial services have been acceptably performed in both Old and New England ; of Dr. Increase Mather, who, going to England, was first settled at Great Torrington, Devonshire, then in the island of Guernsey, and then in Gloucester, before he returned to New England, where he became, as old John Dunton says, "metropolitan clergyman of that country, and rector of Harvard College ;" — of Dr. Benjamin Colman, who was ordained in London, and who ministered in Bath, before he was finally settled in Brattle Street, Boston ; — of Mr. Isaac Smith, who, not gifted and celebrated as those just named, has left behind him a respected memory, and who, before we knew him as the chaplain of one of our eleemosynary institutions, was minister of the little chapel in Sidmouth, Devonshire.

That little chapel in Sidmouth, — we recollect it well. It was a most perfect specimen of a lowly house of worship. You might have passed it ten times a day, without suspecting that it was anything more than a tenantless cottage. Its low walls, entirely unadorned, were stained with a yellow wash, and its thatched roof was only ornamented with clusters of moss, which,

however, did not distinguish it from the adjoining dwellings. There it was, a common cottage, in a street of cottages, so plain that it could not possibly be plainer. How it contrasted with that beautiful old church of the establishment, with its grey stone tower rising from the midst of the picturesque church yard, through which ran a footpath among the graves, shaded by a solemn row of yew-trees, whose age was to be counted by centuries! Surely it must have been something more than whim, and better than pique, which could have induced men to leave such a church, the church of their fathers, guarded all round by their fathers' dust, and assemble in such a shed. It must have been conscience, it must have been honest conviction, it must have been a motive, which, however alloyed by meaner passion, was essentially good and noble. It is to be remembered, also, that the seceders did not, as some of those do, who "sign off" in our own land, ease themselves of a pecuniary burthen, but on the contrary increased it, being obliged to pay their full tax to the establishment, and at the same time to support their own worship. We trust that we should have respected such men, and their little hut-chapel, even though we had differed from them in religious belief, and had been unwilling to join in their worship; but as we did not differ from them in religious belief, we joined with them in their worship while we remained in Sidmouth, and should have done so if we had remained there till this time. We have no idea of deserting our friends, because they assemble under simple thatch, instead of under groined stone; though we also think that we should have been cheerfully willing to pay tithes at Sidmouth, for the pleasure we enjoyed in looking at that old church, and walking through that old churchyard.

Other reminiscences we have, which are connected with other places of worship mentioned in this volume, but space is not given us to relate them in. We cannot break off, however, without noticing one misstatement into which Mr. Murch has fallen. In a biographical notice of the Rev. William Hazlitt, father of Hazlitt the author, he says, "Mr. Hazlitt's visit to this town [Boston] was not, however, in vain; for in a short time he was chiefly instrumental in forming the first Unitarian Church at Boston." Now, though we know that Mr. Hazlitt was active in promulgating the principles of Unitarian belief, while he remained in this country, we are confident that he was *not* chiefly instrumental in forming the first Unitarian Church at Boston, whatever church that may be. If he did form any church here, it is none which is at present in existence, or of which we have ever heard.

*Sermons by Rev. J. B. PITKIN, late Pastor of the Independent Christian Church in Richmond, Va. With a Memoir of the Author.* By Rev. S. G. BULFINCH. Boston: David Reed. 1837. 12mo. pp. 352.—The writer of these sermons was one of those precocious geniuses whom their friends and the world so often combine to spoil; and Mr. Bulfinch, in the highly interesting biographical sketch which he has given us, has communicated a life-lesson which might be instructive to many. Of the subject of his Memoir he says:

"His life was a peculiar one. It may teach the young and romantic, should these pages meet the eye of any such, to avoid those dangers under which he nearly sunk. It may show the necessity of restraining, in early life, not only the passions, but the too exuberant fancy. It may present a warning to those who act as spiritual directors of others, to temper with gentleness the occasional severity of their official duty, and, like their blessed Master, not to break the bruised reed."

"But other and more cheering lessons are afforded by the life of this young divine. We see him for a time overborne by misfortune, censure, and a consciousness of error, yet not relinquishing the hope of better things, working his way upward to the light, and at length attaining and for years occupying the station of a faithful, successful, and respected minister of the Gospel; wearing out his powers in the discharge of duty, and yielding his spirit at length tranquilly to God, with entire confidence in his accepting mercy. From this the advanced Christian may learn never to despair for others; and the young struggler with temptation may acquire the more important lesson, never to despair of himself, and never to distrust the providence of God."

We certainly were much impressed ourselves with these important truths, in reading the life in which they are so vividly set forth by fact and example. Simply, clearly, and with Christian feeling, Mr. Bulfinch has spoken of his friend, and unfolded the history of his deviations, conflicts, and final victory. We do not believe that this chapter of real life can be read without profit.

Mr. Pitkin's sermons were composed after the fever of his youth was cured, and the wild dreams of that season were dreamed, and they show the operations of his maturer mind. A controversial vein runs through them, which is owing to the circumstances in which he was placed, ever surrounded by watchers and opposers. But there is no bitterness in his controversy, and the main body and substance of his discourses consist in the weightier matters of the law. They are written in a clear and manly style, which not unfrequently rises into eloquence. We look upon them as a good exhibition of what

may be called practical Unitarianism, and hesitate not to recommend them to our readers.

*Vegetable Diet; as sanctioned by Medical Men, and by Experience in all Ages.* By WILLIAM A. ALCOTT. Boston : Marsh, Capen, and Lyon. 1838. 12mo. pp. 276. — We regret that the incessant labors of Dr. Alcott, and the other great vegetable men of the day, have not produced a more practical and sensible effect on the meat-market. If those cannibals, who are determined to eat flesh in spite of *his* teeth, could get it at a reasonable price, we should congratulate him and ourselves on the influence of his goose-quill ; but so long as we are obliged to pay for beef, pork, and chickens at the abominable rate of a shilling a pound, we fear that there is still too fierce a demand for those gross and deleterious articles, and that he will be under the necessity of writing many more books, before a proper reform is effected. Therefore we beg him to be not at all disconcerted by what some shallow people say of his rapid book-making, but to write on as fast as he can, and bring out a volume of goodly size once a month, nay, if need be, once a week, till something is done in this matter. It will take at least five or six such books as the one before us to produce any appreciable change, in opinion or prices, before Christmas. And as people will be sure to buy anything which relates to the grand subject of eating, whether it be a Cook's Oracle, or a book which would teach and persuade them to dispense with all cooks and cookery, he may be confident that his works will be bought, however fast he may supply them, and whether they contain what is palatable or unpalatable, digestible or indigestible. One piece of advice, however, we cannot refrain from offering, which is, that Dr. Alcott should keep a strict eye on the moral character of those physicians whose evidence he adduces. We are led to say this, by observing that one of them, Dr. Lambe, of London, lays it down as an axiom, that "Man is herbivorous in his structure." Now we must say, that we never saw a more palpable attempt than this, to cheat us out of our eye-teeth, which, of all kinds of knavery, is universally held to be the sharpest. His very name, moreover, begets a suspicion that he is an interested witness on the subject of food and diet. He should be quoted with great caution.

One word seriously. We have no doubt that too much meat is eaten by the people of this country ; but we cannot think that Dr. Alcott's book is well calculated to make them eat less.

*Buds of Spring. Poetical Remains of AUGUSTUS FOSTER LYDE. With Addenda.* Boston : Perkins and Marvin. 1838. 12mo. pp. 150.—This little work is not offered to critical examination, but is simply a monument of friendship to the memory of a young man of genius and worth. As such we have looked at it with great interest, feeling that it is good even for strangers to be told of the aspiring spirits which waked for a season in our cold world, and were withdrawn before they could be known. The world, and its life, and its hopes become of more value to us in proportion as we find in it a larger number of the gifted and pure, who have been born in it for a better life. Mr. Lyde seems to have been one of these. Dying at the age of twenty-one, just as he was beginning the labors of his profession, no opportunity was allowed him to offer to men the mature fruits of his mind ; but its blossoming was beautiful and full of promise ; and we are pleased that the hand of a friend should gather a few of the buds and flowers, and keep his memory fresh for a time in the souls of those who loved him. If he has added to the bouquet a few similar blossoms of his own, who can blame the desire to mingle with the image of the dead the thoughts that were never separated from the living ?

The story of his life is told in few words. He was born in 1813, was graduated at Washington College in 1830, studied theology in the Episcopal Seminary of New York, devoted himself to the cause of foreign missions, and sank under a feeble constitution and intense action of mind on the 19th November, 1834. There seems to have been a fine union of earnestness and delicacy in his character. His devotion to the missionary service was very fervent. The description of his last meeting with his fellow students, when he and another were to take leave, is striking.

"Exultation was the first emotion experienced, because there rose full in view the good which was to be done, by their zeal and devotion, to the Seminary in which they were educated, to the Church of CHRIST, and, though last, not least, to the perishing souls of men. But how changed were the feelings when he, who had been the instrument of Providence in beginning the enterprise, rose to bid his brethren adieu ! To some, even then, the hand of death seemed laid upon his pallid cheek, and all could not but feel that such *might* be the case, who saw him choking with emotion, and, amid a flood of tears, scarce articulating, 'Pray for me, brethren; pray that my health may be restored; God is my witness, I ask it not for myself,—I ask it for China.' We will not stop to describe the gush of feeling which ensued. Suffice it to say, that many a manly countenance was turned away to hide the glistening signs of sympathy and affection." — pp. xvi, xvii.

We are sorry to be obliged, by the contracted space into which we are driven, to curtail our intended notice, and to omit a beautiful extract, which would show that this young man was born with a genius for more than common achievement.

*An Address delivered before the Senior Class in Divinity College, Cambridge, Sunday Evening, 15 July, 1838.* By RALPH WALDO EMERSON. Boston : James Munroe and Company. 1838. 8vo. pp. 31.—It is not likely that we should have noticed this Address, had it not received some public notice already, and caused some stir and speculation. But as we have been asked repeatedly, whether certain strange notions contained in it are regarded as good divinity by the instructors and students of the Divinity School at Cambridge, and whether the gentleman who advanced these notions is to be considered as thereby uttering or representing the opinions of the body of Unitarian ministers, we deem it right to say, and we believe we have the best authority for saying, that those notions, so far as they are intelligible, are utterly distasteful to the instructors of the School, and to Unitarian ministers generally, by whom they are esteemed to be neither good divinity nor good sense. With regard to their reception among the students, we cannot speak so positively ; we merely know that the only apparent connexion between the School and these notions is, that a majority of the Senior Class, which consisted altogether of seven students, attracted by Mr. Emerson's reputation as a writer and lecturer, invited him to address them on the occasion of their leaving the School, and perhaps listened to him with pleasure, as to one who seemed to speak a new word. That the notions above referred to will be adopted by their composed thoughts, or the style in which they are expressed be imitated in their own writings, we cannot yet believe. However it may turn out, we are well convinced that the instructors of the School should hereafter guard themselves, by a right of veto on the nomination of the students, against the probability of hearing sentiments, on a public and most interesting occasion, and within their own walls, altogether repugnant to their feelings, and opposed to the whole tenor of their own teachings.

In all this we beg to be understood as not questioning the right of the author of this address to utter his own thoughts in his own way. We have no idea of raising against ourselves the cry of persecution, nor any wish whatever of adding to the present list of martyrs, nor the least desire to fetter the human mind by the bonds of prescription and antiquity. Such flagrant designs we most heartily deny and eschew. But we trust that

if any one has a right freely and boldly to say things which we do not like, we have also a right to say, as freely and boldly, that we do not like them; and we beg some of our friends to pause for a while before they pronounce this to be persecution. We regard the author of this address with feelings of respect and friendship; but when called to give our opinion of the address itself, we must speak of it, as a whole, with reprobation, plainly, as we ought to speak and have spoken.

We do not intend to enter into an examination of the objectionable portions of this performance, but as a fair specimen of its matter and manner we quote its concluding paragraph.

"I look for the hour when that supreme Beauty, which ravished the souls of those Eastern men, and chiefly of those Hebrews, and through their lips spoke oracles to all time, shall speak in the West also. The Hebrew and Greek Scriptures contain immortal sentences, that have been bread of life to millions. But they have no epic integrity; are fragmentary; are not shown in their order to the intellect. I look for the new Teacher, that shall follow so far those shining laws, that he shall see them come full circle; shall see their rounding complete grace; shall see the world to be the mirror of the soul; shall see the identity of the law of gravitation with purity of heart; and shall show that the Ought, that Duty, is one thing with Science, with Beauty, and with Joy."

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*The Personality of the Deity. A Sermon, preached in the Chapel of Harvard University, September 23, 1838.* By HENRY WARE, JR., Professor of Pulpit Eloquence and the Pastoral care. Published at the request of the Members of the Divinity School. Boston: James Munroe and Company. 1838. 8vo. pp. 24.—It will not be necessary for us to point out to persons of the least discernment, that the character of the theology of the Cambridge School is more likely to be learned from the discourses and other publications of its professors, than from the Address which we have just noticed, containing the lucubrations of an individual who has no connexion with the School whatever. We thank the members of the School for having requested the publication of this Sermon, and we thank its author for having published it. It is good; it is seasonable. It is a strong and lucid statement of a doctrine which lies at the very foundation of religion, and will tend to disabuse the minds of many respecting the true character and tendency of a set of newly broached fancies, which, deceived by the high sounding pretensions of their proclaimers, they may have thought were about to quicken and reform the world. We extract from the sermon a short portion, in which it is shown with clearness

and brevity, that the denial of the Personality of God is in fact the denial of God.

"It also, in the next place, amounts to a virtual denial of God. Indeed, this is the only sense in which it seems possible to make that denial. No one thinks of denying the existence of principles and laws. Gravitation, order, cause and effect, truth, benevolence,—no one denies that these exist; and if these constitute the Deity, he has not been, and cannot be denied. The only denial possible is by this exclusion of a personal existence. There can be no atheism but this; and this is atheism. If the material universe rests on the laws of attraction, affinity, heat, motion, still all of them together are no Deity; if the moral universe is founded on the principles of righteousness, truth, love, neither are these the Deity. There must be some Being to put in action these principles, to exercise these attributes. To call the principles and the attributes *God*, is to violate the established use of language, and confound the common apprehensions of mankind. It is in vain to hope by so doing to escape the charge of atheism; there is no other atheism conceivable. There is a personal God, or there is none.

"We reason in this case, as in that of a man. Man was made in the image of God. But when we have described so much power, wisdom, goodness, so much beauty, justice, truth, love, we have not described a man; the very essential element is wanting; without adding personality, we may speak of these qualities forever, and they will not make a man. So, too, we may enlarge them infinitely, but unless we add personality, they will never make up the idea of God."

— pp. 13, 14.

This is sense; this is truth; and this is good writing. Here is important doctrine clearly and plainly announced, so that there is no mistaking it, and so that it approves itself equally to the most and the least instructed minds. Here is a style which becomes the subject, simple, manly, straight forward. Give us such writing and such preaching as this, and defend us from the wordiness and mysticism, which are pretending to be a better literature, a higher theology, and almost a new revelation.

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*New Philosophies in the West.* — We are becoming vain of our inventions in philosophy in this part of the country. It would seem, however, that we are not likely to monopolize the new discoveries in this line. From the prospectus copied below it appears that there are those on the other side of the mountains, who can speculate as profoundly, or at least as unintelligibly, as the best of us here. The author resides at Wheeling, West Virginia. Lest some of our over-sensitive readers may be apprehensive that he also is tending to atheism or pantheism, we

would premise that he is as staunch a Christian as needs be, and orthodox withal. Here is his

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"To a Discussion on the nature of the human soul, showing, that it is very mortal, instead of being immortal, as understood by the Christian World — and therefore liable to be lost, and is lost by thousands even in this life ; because it is an attribute of the mind, the spirit, or the principles of human intelligence, and not this principle itself. The arguments are adduced from human experience and knowledge in physical and intellectual science, and in moral and natural philosophy. In all which departments man being conversant has always been convinced of the existence of a real, original, and premogenitive principle of causation, called God in our language ; because this conviction and knowledge are derived to him through the same channel, that brings him a knowledge of the principles of any of the sciences, or even of his own existence. But man not having any means in his power, through the whole range of these acquirements, to determine with certainty on his existence after this life, therefore, the Author of his being has given him assurance of this, by his Word in divers ways and manners formerly, but in these latter days, by his Word dwelling among us, clothed with our flesh and blood. Therefore, as man may, and does exist here with or without this attribute or soul, so also he will exist hereafter with or without it, according to the nature and perpetuity of those objects, out of which, while here, he has derived his soul. I say, according to the nature and perpetuity of those objects ; for the Word has assured us, that the objects of this world will not answer as a treasure or resource, from whence the soul of our future being is derived ; therefore, he has pointed out to us the true and real objects ; and has moreover affirmed, that these are the true and only ones, that will answer this purpose. Consequently, the Scriptures being the declarations of the Word, it is out of them only, that we can arrive at a true and proper knowledge of these objects. Wherefore, I have taken the Scriptures as true, and gathered the truths therein contained, and presented them in order, in maintenance of my position, that the human soul is mortal, and therefore, certain to be lost hereafter by all those, who place it in the objects of this world. The Scriptures then, being the fountain, there arose a necessary inquiry about the nature of Him, who opened it to us, that is, Trinity in Unity, embracing The Father, The Son or Word, and The Holy Spirit — the nature of a new birth or a birth from Heaven — the nature of Baptism, and of the First and Second Resurrection.

"The Discussion will be spread over sixty-four pages, octavo size, medium sheet. It is ready for the press, and will be printed when two hundred copies are taken by subscription. Each copy will come at 50 cts. to subscribers. — Written by

EZEKIEL HILDRETH."

DECEMBER, 1837.

*A Voice of Warning and Instruction to all People, containing a Declaration of the Faith and Doctrine of the Church of the Latter Day Saints, Commonly called Mormons.* By P. P. PRATT, Minister of the Gospel. New York: Printed by W. Sandford. 1837. 24mo. pp. 216.—Here is one of the precious quackeries of our time and country; one of the most extraordinary, and threatening to be one of the most mischievous and fatal impostures, which ever disgraced a civilized people. There seems to be no end nor bound to the gullibility of men. When we first heard of the golden plates of Mormon, which one Joe Smith pretended to have found and interpreted, and were told that a number of persons had become converts to the delusion, we supposed that but a very small number could be seduced by such barefaced fabling, and that Mormonism would soon die out and be forgotten. But now the newspapers are informing us that the Mormons, or Mormonites, are collected in great force at the West, and that with arms in their hands they are carrying on hostilities with the other inhabitants. Latter Day Saints indeed! We trust that they are the last saints, of that complexion, whom we shall be doomed to hear of in our day.

It would be a wearisome task to recount all the solemn fooleries which are crowded into the little book of Mr. Parley P. Pratt, but for the satisfaction of those who may like to know what Mormonism is, or pretends to be, we will give a few extracts from it, which will contain the substance of his explanations. “But what,” he supposes some inquirer to ask, “is that wonderful book, about which there is so much said? what do these strange men testify, that causes so much excitement? let them speak for themselves.” Then follows the answer.

“Well, hearken, my reader. The Book of Mormon was found in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven, in Ontario county, New-York. Was translated and published in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and thirty. It contains the history of the ancient inhabitants of America, who were a branch of the house of Israel, of the tribe of Joseph; of whom the Indians are still a remnant; but the principal nation of them having fallen in battle, in the fourth or fifth century, one of their prophets, whose name was Mormon, saw fit to make an abridgment of their history, their prophesies, and their doctrine, which he engraved on Plates; and afterwards being slain, the Record fell into the hands of his son Moroni, who being hunted by his enemies, was directed to deposit the record safely in the earth, with a promise from God that it should be preserved, and should be again brought to light in the latter days, by means of a Gentile nation, who should possess the land. This deposit was made about the year four hundred and twenty, on a hill then called Cumora, now in Ontario county, where it was preserved in safety,

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until it was brought to light by no less than the ministry of angels, and translated by Inspiration. "And the Great Jehovah bore record of the same to chosen witnesses who declare it to the world." — pp. 128, 129.

This being the history in brief of Mormonism, we will give our readers a touch of its evidences.

"But what are the evidences which we gather from Scripture concerning the coming forth of this glorious work? We shall attempt to prove — first, that America is a promised land to the seed of Joseph; second, that the Lord would reveal to them his truth as well as to the Jews; and third, that their Record should come forth and unite its testimony with the Record of the Jews, in time for the restoration of Israel in the last days.

"First, Gen. xlviij., Jacob, while blessing the two sons of Joseph, says, 'Let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth:' and in the same blessing it is said of Ephraim, his seed shall become a multitude of nations. Now put the sense of these sayings together, and it makes Ephraim a multitude of nations in the midst of the earth. In Gen. xlix, it is prophesied concerning Joseph, (while Jacob was blessing him,) that he should be a faithful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall, the archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him, yet his bow abode in strength. Again he further says, 'the blessings of thy Father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors, unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills; they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren.' Now I ask who *was* Jacob's progenitors, and what was the blessing they conferred upon him? Abraham and Isaac were his progenitors, and the land of Canaan was the blessing they conferred upon him — or that God promised them he should possess. Recollect that Jacob confers on Joseph a much greater land than that of Canaan; even greater than his fathers had conferred upon him, for Joseph's blessing was to extend to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills. Now reader stand in Egypt, where Jacob then stood, and measure to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills, and you will land somewhere in the central part of America. Again, one of the prophets says, in speaking of Ephraim, 'when the Lord shall roar, the children of Ephraim shall tremble from the west.' Now let us sum up these sayings, and what have we gained; first — that Ephraim was to grow into a multitude of nations in the midst of the earth; second — Joseph was to be greatly blest in a large inheritance, as far off as America; third — this was to be on the west of Egypt or Jerusalem.

"Now let the world search from pole to pole, and they will not find a multitude of nations in the midst of the earth, who can possibly have sprung from Ephraim, unless they find them in America; for the midst of all other parts of the earth is inhabited by mixed races, who have sprung from various sources; while here an almost boundless country was secluded from the rest of the world, and inhabited by a race of men, evidently of the same origin, although as evidently divided into many nations. Now the Scriptures cannot be broken, therefore, these

Scriptures must apply to America, for the plainest of reasons — because they can apply no where else." — pp. 131 - 133.

Very plain, indeed ; and as the second and third positions are established in an equally convincing manner, we will omit the arguments in proof of them, and pass over to the practical part of the subject.

"So much then we have produced from the Scriptures, in proof of a work like the book of Mormon, making its appearance in these days ; to say nothing of Isaiah xxix., which we have already noticed in a former part of his work. — But says one, what use is the book of Mormon, even if it be true ? — I answer, first it brings to light an important history before unknown to man. Second, it reveals the origin of the American Indians, which was before a mystery. Third, it contains important prophesies, yet to be fulfilled, which immediately concerns the present generation, and their very existence depends on an immediate understanding of them. Fourth, it contains much plainness in regard to points of doctrine, insomuch that all may understand, and see eye to eye, if they take pains to read it." — pp. 135, 136.

In the midst of all these high and cloudy pretensions of the Mormons there seems to be a political end in view, which it may not be amiss for us to keep in mind, as the events of our Western history are transpiring. This end is expressed in the following, among other passages of Mr. Parley P. Pratt's Voice of Warning.

"And here is the end of the matter ; and I would only add, that the government of the United States has been engaged for upwards of seven years, in gathering the remnant of Joseph, (the Indians,) to the very place where they will finally build a New Jerusalem ; a city of Zion ; with the assistance of the believing Gentiles, who will gather with them from all the nations of the earth ; and this gathering is clearly predicted in the Book of Mormon, and other revelations, and the place before appointed, and the time set for its fulfilment ; and except the Gentiles repent of all their abominations, and embrace the same covenant, and come into the same place of gathering, they will soon be utterly destroyed from off the face of this land : as it is written by Isaiah, the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee, shall perish."

**ERRATUM.** — Page 158, first line, for *case or trial*, read *case on trial*.